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NEA Today

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A NEWSPAPER FOR MEMBERS OF THE N ION ASSOCIATION VOL. 6, NO. 7

Mike Spinak

Proud of Their SCHOOL

TRANSFORMING A 'ROTTEN' SCHOOL INTO A GREAT ONE

story on page 4

PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

Mystery in the Classroom

A new semester. And once again we struggle with the knowledge—the *old* knowledge—that nothing matters more to student achievement than self-esteem.

But the research on this issue seems frustratingly formulaic, as though successfully bolstering student self-esteem were akin to properly lighting a Bunsen burner. You know that's just not true. You know that instincts count for more than formulae. You hope your instincts won't fail you.

You move onward. With anticipation and apprehension. With hope and with doubt. With exhilaration.

The exhilaration won't last. The doubt will. And somehow, too, will the hope.

Yes, hope and doubt alternate. But hope abides. For there is, as soothing balm for everyday doubts, the underlying fact, the decisive fact: there's learning taking place here, youthful potential blooming, character developing, aspirations rising, a miracle unfolding.

They call it education. But the word doesn't begin to convey what this mysterious process is all about. The word says nothing about the experience of teaching. The word just doesn't capture the heartache and the hard work.

Or the love. Love that moves aside the obstacles to learning. Love strong enough to demand disciplined behavior and dedicated study. Love that turns a student's hopeless "I can't" into a hopeful "I'll try."

All this will remain the essence of teaching. Long after education reforms have been implemented and schools restructured and teacher education revamped, what will still matter most is the mystery and the magic of the student/teacher relationship.

Syndicated columnist Carl Rowan knows this magic

Joe Di Dio

NEA President
Mary Hatwood Futrell

well. Rowan is fond of telling the story of his transition from his small hometown high school in McMinnville, Tennessee, to Tennessee State College in Nashville.

The big city intimidated Rowan. So, too, did the city-slicker university. And so, too, did Mrs. Frances Thompson, the teacher in his required art class.

Mrs. Thompson's first demand was that all students write down the grade they expected to receive in her class. The terrified Rowan ("I couldn't draw a box, let alone an apple") summoned up all his courage and wrote down a huge *C*.

After scanning the papers, Mrs. Thompson asked Rowan to stay after class.

Rowan stayed. Thompson spoke: "Young man, would it surprise you if I told you I know every grade you got in high school?"

"No, Ma'am."

"Would it surprise you if I said you never got a *C* in your life?"

"No, Ma'am."

"Then why in the devil are you expecting a *C* in my class?"

Rowan squirmed. Rowan froze. Thompson reached into her desk. She pulled out a piece of paper with words by a man named Daniel Burnham scribbled on it. She read aloud: "Make no little plans. They have no power to stir men's blood and probably in themselves will not be realized. Make big plans."

Thompson handed Rowan another piece of paper. Well, he thought, if she wants me to be ridiculous, I'll be ridiculous. He thought big. He wrote big—a huge *A*.

Comments Rowan today: "I guarantee you no teacher in history ever worked harder to earn her pupil an *A* than did Mrs. Frances Thompson."

What the stern Mrs. Thompson gave the green country kid who would become the celebrated columnist was belief in himself. Self-esteem. That was her magic act, the mystery behind her success.

That was her gift to Carl Rowan. Her resource? Instinct.

Mrs. Thompson, I'm somehow sure, would champion today's education reform efforts. But I'm even more sure that she'd never forget the importance of that magical intangible we call instinct, that intangible that *makes learning possible.*

Even for a poor, frightened youngster from McMinnville, Tennessee. □

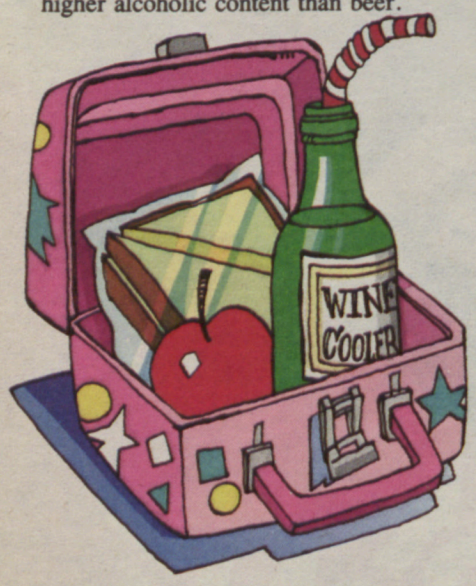
TRENDS

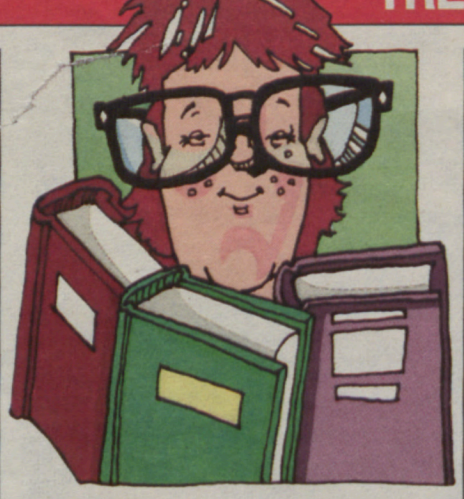
Tippling Tots

We've come a long way from the days when getting high in grade school meant climbing the monkey bars.

Recent surveys of 500,000 U.S. schoolchildren reveal that 26 percent of fourth graders believe their peers are imbibing wine coolers and 34 percent feel peer pressure to join the crowd. Only 50 percent of fourth graders define alcohol as a drug—and only 21 percent consider wine coolers a drug.

While they're made with wholesome fruit-juicy flavors like peach, strawberry, and grape, wine coolers have a higher alcoholic content than beer.





Squint If You're An Intellectual

"Men seldom make passes at girls who wear glasses" is one of those old saws suggesting spectacle wearers are more apt to be brainy than boy crazy.

Well, on the first score that may be right. Researchers from Tel Aviv University, reporting in a specialty journal of the American Medical Association, found a strong statistical correlation between nearsightedness and both high intelligence and amount of schooling.

So strong is the link that among people of given schooling and intelligence, it's possible to predict the percentage with myopia. For those scoring 80 or less on a standard IQ test (100 is average), about 8 percent will be myopic; among those scoring 128 or higher, more than 27 percent will be.

The researchers offer various hypotheses: myopic people prefer "close" work, such as reading, which increases their intelligence; intelligent people read so much that their vision is affected; or myopia and intelligence are directly linked in some genetic way.

College Guides: Misguided?

Where can you find a college that's "very competitive," "less competitive," and "moderately difficult"—all at the same time?

By consulting those collegiate gospels according to contradictory researchers, as in The College Board's *College Handbook,* Barron's *Profiles of American Colleges,* and Simon and Schuster's *The Right College.*

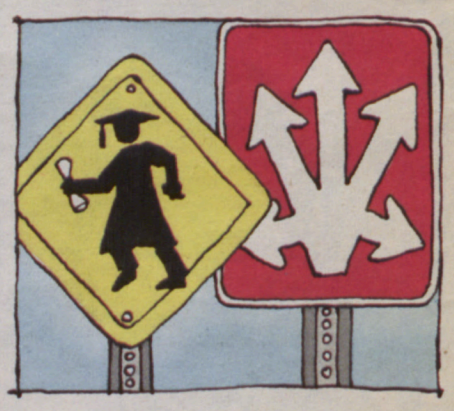
A comparison of these "authoritative" publications by *USA Today* reveals wide discrepancies in the way they report a given institution's SAT requirements, costs, and percentage of applicants accepted.

Possible factors to explain these contradictions: the complexity of the questionnaires on which the books are based, the timing of the surveys, and the likelihood that questions are answered differently by various officials on the same campus.

Where the Jobs Are

With the number of jobs predicted to grow 50 percent faster than the labor pool over the next eight years, expect the "Help Wanted" shingle to get a good workout.

As to where the help will be *most* wanted, the prognosticators can't say



enough about the service industry, where almost 90 percent of all new jobs are being created. With the much ballyhooed graying of America, job opportunities in the health services are expected to mushroom—as are those in the hotel and restaurant industry and in retailing.

If your students go on to follow the fickle path of other college grads, they'll change jobs an average of seven times during their working years. □

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CAMPAIGN '88

No National Endorsement–Yet

An NEA national endorsement for the Presidential primaries could still come this spring. In the meantime, state Associations are working hard to get NEA members elected as delegates to this summer's political conventions, Republican and Democratic.

The Presidential candidates vying for NEA's endorsement in '88 will have to wait a little longer. The NEA-PAC Council, the governing body of NEA's political action arm, decided at its December meeting in Washington, D.C., not to endorse any Presidential candidate at this time.

But that decision didn't put NEA political activity on hold—not by a long shot. NEA state affiliates are now working hard to get Association members elected as delegates to this summer's political conventions.

"Six of the 13 candidates now in the race are acceptable by NEA-PAC standards," notes Ken Melley, director of NEA Government Relations. "Each of these six has completed the questionnaire and interview required by our endorsement process, and each supports most of NEA's legislative goals."

Other candidates, NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell emphasizes, are still welcome to complete the steps necessary for NEA endorsement consideration (*see story below*).

The December NEA-PAC Council decision not to endorse came after a recommendation by President Futrell. Addressing the Council, she summarized the opinions NEA members expressed at open hearings around the nation last summer and fall.

In all, noted President Futrell, NEA state and local affiliates sponsored more than 1,790 open hearings on the Presidential race. The 35,300 Association members who turned out for the hearings advised against an early NEA Presidential endorsement.

But NEA's state affiliates are starting to endorse "acceptable" candidates, and to back members who want to represent those candidates at the party conventions.

The Georgia Association of Educators, for example, has endorsed Michael Dukakis, Albert Gore, Jesse Jackson, and Paul Simon. "People are really involved, because the Democratic convention will be in Atlanta," says Gloria Slaughter, who coordinates GAE's Fourth Congressional District team in nearby DeKalb County. "When we wrote every member in the district, asking for volunteers to run for delegate, about two dozen responded." A few were Republicans, and the team told them how to pursue their party's process.

For the Democrats, the team worked with groups like the NAACP, NOW, Freeze Voter, and unions to agree on delegate slates for the primary election March 8 (Super Tuesday), which will fill the district's five delegate slots at the Democratic convention. "Most people aren't familiar with this process, so we're getting a lot of members involved for the first time," Slaughter notes. "And the campaigns are very excited that GAE members want to be on their slates."

Over on the Republican side, Donna Fahlen is one of many NEA members trying to build a pro-education agenda into the GOP platform.

"We did our basic work in 1986," says Fahlen, a 15-year Republican activist who chairs the Michigan Education Association's Republican Educators Project. "We went out and found members who were likely candidates for delegate, talked them into running, gave them tips on campaigning. What it took was just a lot of person-to person contact."

Adds Fahlen: "The theme of all our activities has been support for education, rather than a specific candidate for President. It's important to get Association members elected as delegates to keep education issues in the forefront."

In many other states, in a wide range of situations and in both parties, Association members and affiliates are now involved in determining who will be the next President of the United States.

Meanwhile, at its February or April meetings, the NEA-PAC Council could still nationally endorse one or more candidates for nomination.

—Jane Power

The Candidates and Education: *What Do We Now Know?*

Thanks to the NEA endorsement process, education employees now know a great deal about the positions of six contenders for the '88 Presidential nominations.

Six of the Democratic candidates—Bruce Babbitt, Michael Dukakis, Richard Gephardt, Albert Gore, Jesse Jackson, Paul Simon—have both answered NEA's questionnaire on the issues and had a videotaped interview with Mary Hatwood Futrell. All six agree with most of NEA's legislative positions.

The questionnaire results appeared in the October 1987 *NEA Today*, and 1,200 copies of the videos were distributed to NEA state and local affiliates for viewing at the NEA Presidential open hearings held during the fall.

We know much less about the Republican candidates. Two of them, Paul Laxalt and Robert Dole, answered the questionnaire but did not choose to do a videotaped interview. In August, Laxalt dropped out of the race. Jack Kemp has completed the interview but not the questionnaire, while George Bush, Pierre Du Pont, Alexander Haig, and Marian (Pat) Robertson have not so far been willing to take any part in the NEA endorsement process.

"I find it basically incredible," says NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell, "that the Republican candidates would reject the 600,000 NEA members who are Republicans—but that's what they've done. We made numerous phone calls and sent out numerous letters, trying to get them to take part in our endorsement process, so I am extremely disappointed that they have not become much more involved."

But although so far only Democrats are acceptable candidates as defined by the NEA-PAC Council, this situation could change between now and the national party conventions. Any Republican who completes both the questionnaire and the videotaped interview, and who supports a majority of NEA's legislative program positions, will also become an acceptable candidate, eligible for support by state Associations.

—J.P.

News Beat

● The Council of Chief State School Officers is urging states to enact new model legislation that aims to help cut the **dropout rate** to zero by the year 2000. CCSSO's model law would guarantee all students the right to be enrolled in a school with an "appropriately certified staff," the right to receive a written individualized teaching and learning plan approved by them and their parents, and the right to participate in childhood development programs "beginning ideally by age 3, but no later than age 4."

● More than a third of the states now require schools to have **AIDS education** curriculums. But the National Association of State Boards of Education reports that too often AIDS instruction is not explicit enough in describing how the disease is transmitted and how it can be prevented. Asserts NASBE Executive Director Phyllis Blaunstein: "This is no time to mince words. What young people don't know can hurt them, will hurt them—and *is* hurting them."

● Since 1940, **high school graduation rates** for both white and Black students have jumped dramatically, the U.S. Census Bureau reported last month. But there's still a major graduation gap between Blacks and whites. According to the Census Bureau study, in 1940 just 26 percent of white adults and 7 percent of Black adults had high school diplomas. In 1985, the graduation rate among whites stood at 76 percent, and among Blacks at 60 percent. High school graduation rates were not tabulated for Hispanic adults until 1974, when 36 percent of that population were found to possess high school diplomas. The figure rose to 48 percent in 1985.

● In a new booklet, *Dealing with Dropouts*, the Urban Superintendents Network cites **early intervention** as the key to dropout prevention. The Network, a coalition sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, says that the academic and social progress of kindergartners must be carefully monitored and special help must be given to youngsters who show signs of being at risk for school failure. □

WELL PUT!

Focus on Sports

"We must, as a nation, work toward making our schools and colleges the kinds of places where learning is paramount, and football and basketball are not."

—Sports announcer Howard Cosell, in his nationally syndicated newspaper column, December 6, 1987.

SCHOOL REFORM...

Turning A School Around

Association members in San Francisco's Mission District have transformed a 'horror story' elementary school into a startling success. Here's how.

Mike Spinelli

Association rep Winnie Porter (left) pauses to talk with Principal Judy Kell on the schoolyard steps. Excellent staff communication has been key to the Hawthorne turnaround.

Mike Spinelli

Tim Curbo with his first grade class, part of Hawthorne's exemplary bilingual program.

Mike Spinelli

Philip Payeur and Marlene Callejas in Hawthorne's Staff Renewal Room, the former principal's office.

Three years ago, Hawthorne Elementary was a school in trouble. Physical conditions were abysmal—broken windows in every room, falling plaster and ceiling tiles everywhere. Radiators didn't work. Filthy, stopped-up water fountains spilled water into the halls. In the boys' bathroom the urinals were broken, the doors gone. The stench of urine permeated the building. The schoolyard was littered with trash, beer cans, and human excrement. Graffiti covered the walls.

Hawthorne's physical deterioration was symptomatic of its educational malaise. A tyrannical principal kept teachers cowed—and separated. He berated staff members in front of colleagues and parents—and "punished" those who dared raise questions or make suggestions—by transferring problem students into their classes, refusing to recommend that their students with learning disabilities be placed in special education classes, and similar forms of harassment.

There was no coherent curriculum, no discipline policy, no consultation of teachers about decisions affecting the school. Educational materials were doled out at the principal's whim. Most teachers bought their own.

"The policy was 'close your door and teach,'" recalls Tim Curbo, a first grade bilingual teacher who's been at Hawthorne for seven years. "'Don't concern yourself with what's going on in the halls or other classrooms.' Our goal was survival."

Today Hawthorne is a very different school. The hallways are neat, clean, and decorated with children's work. The schoolyard is litter-free—and murals have replaced the graffiti. The building has been repaired. It works—and it's obvious that people take pride in the school.

The faculty meets regularly to discuss educational issues. Ideas and suggestions are freely exchanged. Student progress and instructional strategies are staples of teachers' lunchtime conversation. A schoolwide disciplinary policy has reduced behavior problems. Hawthorne's 700 students are learning, and its bilingual program is held up as a model.

The changes are the direct result of Hawthorne teachers' getting together, enlisting the help of the San Francisco Classroom Teachers Association (SFCTA), and joining forces with parents and students to rebuild the school.

It hasn't been an easy three years. The Hawthorne staff has worked hard, put in a lot of time and effort, and gone through considerable grief together. But they've achieved what no one thought could be done—they've turned one of the worst schools in the city into a school where poor and minority students are learning. A school that staff and children are happy to come to each morning.

"Teachers were scared," says Danelle Mann, recalling the atmosphere at Hawthorne three years ago. "We dreaded coming to work in the morning—and couldn't wait to leave in the evening. A number of us developed physical problems—ulcers, hair loss, other symptoms of stress. We felt powerless."

Mann is a reading specialist who's been at Hawthorne for 20 years. She was one of a group of teachers who nine years ago approached the area administrator for Hawthorne to explain the terrible educational and physical situation at the school.

"Ten or 12 of us went," she says. "We documented what was happening in the school. Nothing changed. But the principal found out about our visit—and he hounded us. Only two of us are still at Hawthorne. The rest couldn't take it—they transferred to other schools."

But in January 1985, a seemingly small event occurred that was to have profound consequences for Hawthorne School. SFCTA staff person Carolyn Doggett called to set up a meeting with Hawthorne teachers.

"We were quite frankly skeptical—even hostile," recalls Winnie Porter, a bilingual kindergarten teacher who's been at Hawthorne for six years. "We really didn't think anyone could—or would—do anything to help."

Doggett couldn't believe what she found at Hawthorne. "It looked—and felt—like a derelict building. And I've never seen a group of teachers with such low morale, so little hope. But these teachers were determined to stick it out. They'd committed themselves to staying at Hawthorne and providing a good education for the kids."

At the time few, if any, of the Hawthorne teachers were Association members. Doggett convinced them that by using the SFCTA contract, they could force the administration to take action.

"A number of things came together in 1984-85," says Alan Gilbert, a 17-year teaching veteran who's been at Hawthorne for six years. "There were a group of us who were fairly new to the school. We'd been hired as long-term substitutes, and that year we got probationary status. That meant we had some rights and protections.

"We were also maturing as professionals," continues Gilbert, who this year teaches a fourth-fifth grade class. "We realized that *we* knew what was needed to teach our children—and we were angry because we weren't being allowed to do what was necessary."

So a group of Hawthorne teachers decided they would fight—through the Association. "Six of us joined SFCTA," Tim Curbo recalls. "We learned the contract backwards and forwards, and we started filing grievances over harassment, the physical condition of the building, safety, unfair evaluations. Whatever was wrong with the school—and there was plenty—we grieved."

February 1985 turned into March, the grievances remained unresolved, and the principal stepped up his harassment. "It was a difficult time," says Winnie Porter. "We had to be very tough, hard-nosed, constantly on guard. The school became a battlefield. Sunday nights—thinking about Monday morning—were the worst. Carolyn Doggett got us into the habit of phoning each other every Sunday, shoring each other up to face the week ahead.

"We couldn't have done it without Carolyn," Porter adds. "She kept up our morale and kept us focused on the most important thing—providing our students with the opportunity to learn."

Hawthorne is in the heart of San Francisco's Mission District, a low-income, transient, largely Hispanic neighborhood. Forty percent of Hawthorne's 700 pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students come from "the Mission"; the others are bused from two other low-income areas of the city.

The student body is 39 percent Hispanic, 26 percent Black, 20 percent Chinese, 15 percent "other" (primarily Southeast Asian). Eighty percent of Hawthorne's students are classified as having little or no English proficiency, or as being dialectally different (not speaking standard English as their primary language).

"People say you can't get low-income minority parents involved," says Winnie Porter. "But we did. At the end of March 1985, more than 70 parents, students, and teachers went to a school board meeting—in a torrential rain—to tell the board they *had* to fix up our school."

Also in March, NEA Vice-President Keith Geiger visited Hawthorne during a trip to San Francisco. "In all my years in education," says Geiger, "I've never been so appalled or so angry about the condition of a school. Hawthorne was a classic example of a school for poor, minority kids being ignored because it had no access to the power structure—because nobody cared."

Geiger wrote to U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett, with copies to the San Francisco superintendent and school board president, calling the conditions at Hawthorne to their attention.

Hawthorne had gone public. The teachers and Association were letting the power structure know that someone

...AT THE BUILDING LEVEL

Mike Spinelli

All smiles amid a San Francisco rain...Hawthorne students walk through their schoolyard, now adorned with murals. Inset photo, taken in 1985, shows some of the graffiti that used to cover the school.

did care. Results soon followed. Within a week repair crews showed up and began fixing the worst of the myriad physical deficiencies. At the end of April, the principal went on sick leave for the remainder of the school year. In August 1985, a new principal was appointed.

"We succeeded because we stuck together," says Mario Chang, a bilingual second grade teacher whose five years in teaching have all been at Hawthorne. "The teachers who tried to make changes before went to the administration—and got burned. We went through our union—our organization, committed to defending us and the right of our students to learn."

"When the superintendent offered me this job," says Judy Kell, the principal at Hawthorne since the fall of 1985, "he told me the only thing Hawthorne had going for it was a top staff."

Kell, who spent 20 years as an elementary teacher and active SFCTA member before becoming an administrator, laughs. "I thought to myself, 'The *only* thing?' It sounded like a pretty important thing to me."

For the past two and a half years, Kell has worked with the Hawthorne staff to build an exemplary school on the ashes of a terrible one. "We spent the first year almost entirely on the building," recalls Kell. "It took that long to fix up the school, to create an environment where teachers could teach and students could learn."

Then, in the 1986-87 school year, the Hawthorne staff turned its full attention to the curriculum. Through biweekly faculty meetings and weekly grade-level meetings, the teachers have developed a coherent curriculum that directly addresses the needs of Hawthorne's diverse student body.

The school now has model Spanish and Chinese bilingual programs, grouping for reading across the grades, and a series of oral language classes that work with each student's strengths and weaknesses.

The behavior of all students is the concern of every teacher—and they've agreed on a schoolwide approach to discipline. "We really do operate as a team, a family," comments Mario Chang. "And the students can feel it. When you stop a student in the hall, you never hear 'You're not *my* teacher, I don't have to listen to *you*' anymore."

"The role of the principal is to be an instructional leader," says Kell. "There are 23 teachers in this school—each has an average of 10 years' experience. That's 230 years of teaching staring me in the face.

"I don't pretend to know more than that combined experience. My job is to bring the teachers together and help them use their expertise for our kids."

The Hawthorne staff is proud of what it's accomplished. Three years ago it was known as the worst San Francisco elementary school. This year, Kell proudly notes, 100 parents from other parts of the city submitted requests to enroll their children at Hawthorne.

But the staff still must struggle with limited resources and California's state funding cuts.

"This year our assistant principal was cut to half-time," laments Kell. "So I spend more time on discipline and administrative details—and less time on instructional issues and parent involvement."

Winnie Porter's bilingual kindergarten class has 34 students. "It's almost impossible to achieve excellence with classes as large as ours," says Porter. "We need more time, more resources, for our students.

"But we're going to do it," she concludes. "Hawthorne School is going to show the world that it's possible to provide an excellent public education to poor, minority kids."

—Heidi Steffens

Teachers Key to School Renewal

Turning a school around is not a job for the fainthearted or the quick fixer. Schools generally don't get bad all at once—and they don't get better overnight either. The renewal process often involves a certain degree of risk-taking, shaking up the status quo.

In any given year hundreds, maybe thousands of schools—large urban to small rural—go through some level of renewal. It may be as simple as building on the sense of optimism that pervades a school when it opens in the fall. Or it may be as sweeping as the kind of wholesale, top-to-bottom overhaul San Francisco's Hawthorne School undertook three years ago.

Education researchers Ann Lieberman and Susan Rosenholtz, in *The Ecology of School Renewal* (National Society for the Study of Education, July 1987), cite the "school culture" as the key factor in successful school reform.

A healthy school culture, the authors note, is one in which "...those involved focus on the relationships between superintendents and principals, principals and teachers, and teachers and students. No one group is at fault and no one group alone can change a school. All need to be involved in reshaping it, building and encouraging new structures that facilitate collaborative work, creating new roles that make shared leadership functions possible, and providing new incentives..."

The question is who will take the lead in the reconstruction process.

Brown University's Theodore Sizer, whose Coalition of Essential Schools is working with 50 public and private schools seeking to change the status quo, says "having a core—say 15 to 20 percent—of leader teachers is most crucial." Unfortunately, says Sizer, even with this solid base, "there's no magic formula, no step-by-step game plan that will work in all schools."

Instead, Sizer says, each school must assess its own possibilities: Are there adequate financial resources? What are the politics of the school system? How deep is parents' interest? Then, adds Sizer, the core group of teachers must seek the active support of other teachers, the principal, the superintendent, the school board, and the community.

It appears that San Francisco's Hawthorne School has found the "good school" formula. Others have too. In Oak Ridge, Tenn., Willow Brook Elementary students often exceed the academic performance of other Oak Ridge students—an achievement that would have been impossible four years ago. Principal George Walker credits a schoolwide assessment, a five-year action plan, regular staff development programs, and broad community support.

In Seattle's inner city, the 230-student Montlake Elementary School has been totally reorganized since 1983. Smaller classes and other changes have led to greatly improved student test scores and kudos from parents.

Montlake math teacher and Association member Irene Gunnette says she feels like a crusader. "You want the best for kids," she adds, "and we've worked out the best system I've seen in years."

—Bill Fischer

HUMAN RIGHTS

Stand Up and Be Counted

The 1990 census is just around the corner. The Census Bureau, part of the U.S. Department of Commerce, is gearing up now for April 1990, when it will mail a census form to all 106 million U.S. households.

The short form, asking about household members' ages, genders, races, marital status, and housing unit, will go to 83 percent of all households. The other 17 percent will get the long census form, which asks for detailed socioeconomic data.

Standing up and being counted by the Census Bureau at the beginning of each new decade may seem like an easy thing to do. After all, the federal government has been taking censuses of the population every 10 years since 1790.

But the census process is still not perfect. According to the Washington-based Coalition for Equal Representation, 1.1 percent of the population—2.5 million Americans—were counted twice in 1980. This overcounting occurs when people own or live in more than one home and receive and return a census form for each residence.

More serious is the problem of *under*counting, especially among ethnic minorities and residents of inner cities and rural areas. While the total undercount in the 1980 census was estimated at 1.4 percent, the undercount for Blacks was 7.2 percent and for Hispanics almost 5.8 percent.

It's important that the census count be accurate, because the 1990 census data will be used through the turn of the century as the statistical basis for—

- Determining representation in the U.S. House of Representatives.
- Redistricting state legislatures.
- Distributing federal dollars to state and local governments.
- Helping state governments dispense their tax revenue.
- Facilitating planning by government, business, and industry.
- Establishing affirmative action plans.

Undercounting occurs when people fear governmental intrusion and deliberately avoid the census, when they don't speak or read English and aren't contacted by census workers who are supposed to follow up to make sure all households return their forms, or when census workers avoid their neighborhoods as unsafe.

Counting the members of ethnic subgroups and getting enough data about them is an equally serious census problem. While both long and short forms for the 1990 census will permit respondents to check off their major racial groups, the forms will allow only write-ins of subgroups. This will be a change from the 1980 census, which allowed Asians and Pacific Islanders, for example, to check off one of nine ethnic categories (Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Guamanian, Hawaiian, Japanese, Korean, Samoan or Vietnamese) or to write in another.

This "scaling down" of the Census Bureau's efforts to identify and count Asians and Pacific Islanders will perpetuate their underrepresentation and will have "deleterious effects on the funding levels and types of program assistance available to them from the federal government," predicts NEA Asian and Pacific Islander Caucus Chair Robert Johan of Woodridge, Ill.

The 1990 census forms will permit Hispanic persons to check off Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban origin as they did in 1980. The Census Bureau is considering allowing Hispanic subgroup write-ins also.

A related problem: the Census Bureau gets socioeconomic information about each group from the long form. The data on this form, which is completed by only 17 percent of the population, are statistically "inflated" to depict the condition of the entire population. Given the traditional undercount, the statistical picture of ethnic minorities may be skewed.

Concerned about the overcount, the Census Bureau has traditionally placed on all census forms a question about dual residences. It will begin tabulating and analyzing this information for the first time in the 1990 census in a further effort to eliminate the overcount.

Even more concerned about under- than overcounting, the Bureau has established an outreach program to encourage a greater response from ethnic minorities. The Bureau has appointed four Official Minority Advisory Committees, which have been meeting since 1986. Next month a "dress rehearsal" for the 1990 census will be held in Washington State and Missouri.

Meanwhile Rep. Mervyn Dymally (D-Calif.), chair of the House Subcommittee on Census and Population, has introduced H.R. 3511. This bill would require that the 1990 census figures be corrected to eliminate both undercounts and overcounts—and that these corrected counts serve as the official census figures for all purposes.

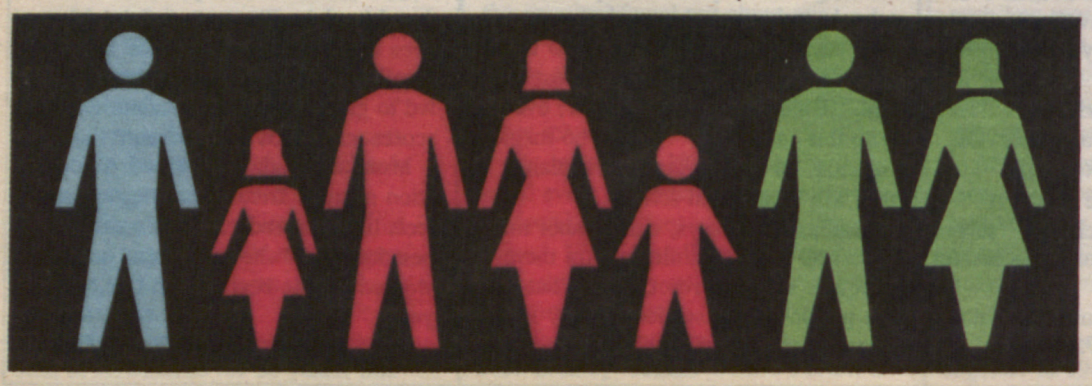
Another House Democrat from California, Rep. Robert Matsui, is considering introducing a bill to force the Census Bureau to allow subgroup checkoff, to gather complete data from the form that it sends to every household, and to publish the results in a timely manner. Matsui asks that readers who have information on the use of census data about minority subgroups send that information to him at 2419 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515.

—Mary Faber, NEA Human and Civil Rights

Contribute to Census Education Project

Do you use census data in your classroom, or have you developed an interesting lesson plan on the census? If so, the Census Bureau would like to hear about it for inclusion in a package of teaching ideas that will be made available to all elementary and secondary schools in March 1989 as part of a 1990 Bicentennial Census Education Project.

Send your lesson plan to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census Education Project, Decennial Planning Division, Washington, DC 20233, by December 1988.



WASHINGTON WATCH

Education will be a key issue in the 1988 Presidential election. Republican Party activists such as NEA members (from left) Ray Holmberg of North Dakota, Dennis Smith of Massachusetts, and Jim Campbell of Utah are making sure the voice of educators is heard in GOP debate and action.

Education and the GOP: A New Beginning

Through the first half of this century, by policy or unspoken rule, education employees were discouraged from active participation in politics.

Today, thanks to hard work by NEA members of both major political parties, few Americans question the right of educators to exercise their political rights as citizens.

The battle now has shifted to a higher ground. The new battle NEA members are waging is a battle to make education a top priority for both major political parties.

Winning this fight will require NEA members to become effective participants in the political process. It will demand a concerted grassroots effort, with action at the state and local level backed up by resources and coordination from NEA at the national level.

That effort is already under way, in the Democratic Party *and* the Republican Party.

NEA member Ray Holmberg is a counselor at Central High School in Grand Forks—and a Republican senator in the North Dakota state legislature. He's also a key player in the movement nationwide to more deeply involve NEA's 600,000 Republican members in their political party.

"The key for increasing NEA member involvement in Republican politics is to become activists within the party," explains Holmberg. "Those who do volunteer work, who show up at meetings in non-election years, those are the ones who are listened to."

In Massachusetts, the NEA state affiliate recently joined with the Massachusetts Republican Party to host a conference where Association members and Republican state legislators met and shared ideas.

Middleboro (Mass.) Junior High School history teacher Dennis Smith, a 10-year veteran of Republican Party politics who helped organize that conference, believes involvement in party politics has two functions: governmental and political.

"We want to share our viewpoint with legislators, but we also want to help Republican candidates develop education positions that will appeal to educators," says Smith.

The efforts in Massachusetts, says Smith, have been productive.

"We've been able to get Republican candidates to develop positions that are good on education—not the 'no government,' 'anti-education' positions that typify some Republican candidates," Smith notes. "We can have the same impact on the national level, too."

Jim Campbell, president of the Utah Education Association, is the first chair of the NEA Republican Caucus, organized at the 1985 NEA Representative Assembly. Campbell points out that Republican Association members are an important resource, especially in states such as Utah where the governor's mansion and both houses of the legislature are all controlled by Republicans.

"Republican legislators recognize that I'm a Republican and have been active in the Party," says Campbell. "They know we won't endorse any candidate—from any party—who won't work for education."

The purpose of this reinvigorated NEA member interest in Republican party politics? Holmberg has a solid answer: "The idea is to get Republican and Democratic officials involved in a common purpose—supporting and improving education. By working in both parties we're better able to ensure that something good for education comes about."

—Michael Pons, NEA Government Relations

State Side

MID-ATLANTIC

The 7,200-member Delaware State Education Association has filed suit in state superior court challenging the state board of education's move to mandate the length of a teacher's day in the classroom.

At a November meeting, board members voted that all Delaware teachers must teach 7½ hours daily, beginning next fall or when their current contract expires.

"We have a collective bargaining law that says our working conditions—including hours—are subject to local negotiation," points out DSEA President Mary Anne Galloway.

Many Delaware teachers already work 7½-hour days, she adds. The issue isn't the length of the workday, but whether the state board has the right to decide it.

MIDWEST

Indiana Gov. Robert Orr plans no more for this year than "consolidating" the gains education made in the last legislative session—but the Indiana State Teachers Association is working to continue to move the education agenda.

"If Indiana's leaders fall for the illusion that one session devoted to education compensates for decades of neglect, they do so at Indiana's economic peril," warns ISTA President Damon Moore.

Last year the legislature appropriated $20 million for programs for at-risk children, based on ISTA's research on low-income and single-parent families. The money was appropriated in the form of grants. ISTA is urging that this year the same amount be added to the school formula, so that the program will become a part of the regular school budget.

Other ISTA legislative priorities: appropriations for early childhood education and all-day kindergarten programs, and extension of "Prime Time" to fourth grade. Prime Time, an ISTA-backed statewide move to reduce teacher-pupil ratios in kindergarten through third grade, was launched in 1984 and has proved very successful.

WEST

A revolution in women's athletics may be under way in Texas because the Texas State Teachers Association took the grievance of eight women coaches all the way to federal court.

The women coached in the LaPorte Independent School District, near Houston, and were members of the LaPorte Education Association. In their grievance they charged that the district gave male coaches longer coaching seasons and higher stipend rates than it gave female coaches in equivalent sports. The school board and the state commissioner of education ruled against the women.

Then TSTA filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which found the district in violation of the equal pay provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act. EEOC authorized the women to take their case to federal court.

TSTA filed the suit, but before the case came to trial the two sides settled. The district agreed to pay the eight women a total of $5,733 and—probably more important—to implement a new salary schedule that will provide equal compensation to all coaches.

TSTA is asking each local Association "to review existing salary schedules and stipend schedules for coaches of both sexes, and if there are differences, to file grievances," reports TSTA President Charles Beard. If grievances fail to correct the problem, he says, TSTA plans to pursue the cases through EEOC and the courts.

SOUTHEAST

The Asociación de Maestros de Puerto Rico (AMPR), NEA's affiliate in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, has long pressed for salary increases for the island's 40,000 teachers. Now Gov. Rafael Hernandez Colón has announced a significant raise in the islandwide pay scale for teachers.

The current salary for a beginning teacher with a bachelor's degree is $760 a month, but by April 1989 no teacher is to be earning less than $1,000 a month.

Teachers at the top step of their level on the salary schedule will get an increase of $50 a month, and further steps will be added to ensure that their salaries reflect their greater experience.

The increases are designed not only to secure the position of teachers in the Commonwealth's middle-income bracket but also to alleviate the growing teacher shortage by attracting young people who might otherwise choose occupations that pay more but are less interesting to them.

PACIFIC

Teachers in Idaho are guaranteed the right to bargain by law. But for education support personnel, bargaining is at the whim of the school district.

The Idaho Education Association is lobbying for passage of an ESP bargaining bill in the current legislative session. When a similar bill failed to win approval last year, IEA went a different route, working with the senate education committee to set up hearings around the state.

Over 30 IEA support members testified—detailing for legislators the low wages, harassment, and lack of rights and job security they face in districts opting not to bargain. It's up to the legislature, they said, to grant this right to ESP.

NORTHEAST

Association-backed bills to grant paid health insurance benefits to retired New Jersey teachers passed the state senate unanimously in December and were on Gov. Thomas Kean's desk at press time.

The bills also provide for prefunding health benefits and their annual cost-of-living adjustments for the state's retired teachers. This approach will enable the state to set aside more money to provide this benefit for future retirees, thereby preventing the benefit from falling victim to changing political tides.

"This package of bills will provide retired teachers with fair and equitable health insurance," says NJEA President Dennis Giordano. "This is a great win for NJEA and the New Jersey Retired Educators Association—and for the people the Associations represent." □

FALLING SHORT ON FITNESS

State P.E. Standards Lack Muscle

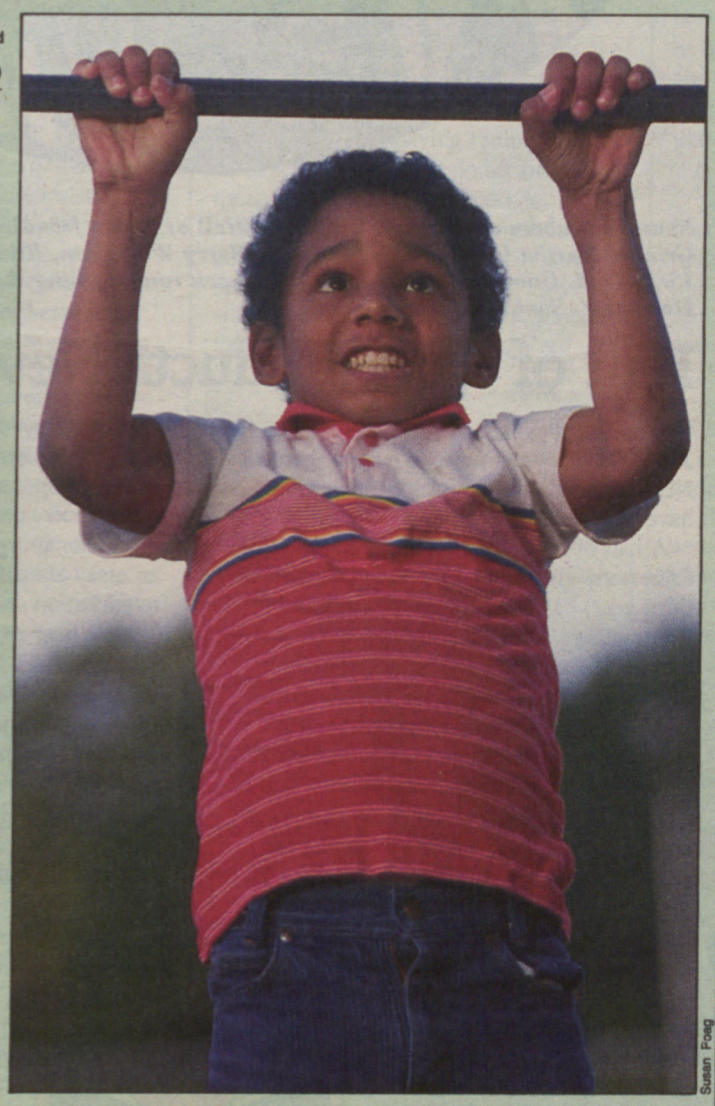
The American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance recently surveyed the 50 states to determine exactly how much—if any—physical education they require K-12 students to take.

Only four states, it turns out, require all students to take a prescribed amount of physical education in all grades. Only five require elementary students to take phys ed for 150 or more minutes per week—the equivalent of only 30 minutes a day. While most states require high school students to take some physical education, 22 require it for just one year; only six require phys ed in all four years.

The American Alliance recommends a minimum requirement of 30 minutes of phys ed every day in grades K-6 and 50 minutes every day in grades 7-12—for a total of 91,800 minutes of phys ed in a student's school career. Only one state—Illinois—meets these minimum requirements.

No wonder the U.S., despite all its adult joggers and body builders, is experiencing a youth fitness crisis. □

Rank	State	Minutes of P.E. Required Per Student Career (K-12)
1	Illinois	96,300
2	Louisiana	71,136
3	California	64,800
4	New York	57,240
5	Alabama	55,800
6	Tennessee	54,180
7	New Jersey	54,144
8	Minnesota	51,516
9	Texas	50,346
10	Rhode Island	46,800
	Washington	46,800
12	Massachusetts	37,800
	Wisconsin	37,800
14	Arizona	37,467
15	Kentucky	35,550
16	Georgia	32,400
	South Carolina	32,400
18	Missouri	30,600
19	Vermont	30,240
20	West Virginia	27,945
21	Ohio	27,432
22	Utah	23,202
23	Delaware	20,376
24	New Mexico	18,468
25	Idaho	18,360
26	Hawaii	18,000
	Montana	18,000
28	New Hampshire	16,200
29	Nevada	14,400
30	Indiana	11,500
31	Virginia	10,800
	Pennsylvania	10,800
33	North Dakota	9,468
	Oregon	9,468
35	North Carolina	9,000
	Kansas	9,000
	Maryland	9,000
38	Arkansas	8,100
39	Connecticut	7,200
	Iowa	7,200
41	Nebraska	5,400
42	Florida	4,500
43	Arizona	0
	Colorado	0
	Maine	0
	Michigan	0
	Mississippi	0
	Oklahoma	0
	South Dakota	0
	Wyoming	0



Susan Poag

Source: The Shape of the Nation: A Survey of State Physical Education Requirements, to be published this spring by the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 1900 Association Dr., Reston, VA 22091.

Local Look

TEXAS

The Texas State Teachers Association now speaks for more employees of the Houston Independent School District than any other employee group. In recent proportional representation elections, the Houston Teachers Association (HTA) won five of 10 seats on a representative council that "meets and confers" with the board of HISD, the largest school district in Texas.

HTA won two seats representing teachers and one each representing custodians/groundskeepers, maintenance workers, and bus drivers.

"This was HTA's first try at representing education support staff," observes Essie Teamer, an HTA area officer, "and we won a majority in every ESP race in which we were on the ballot.

"In fact," Teamer continues, "had the elections been winner-take-all, HTA would have won every race we entered."

OREGON

The 463 teachers in Albany didn't want to strike. But when the school district dared them to—insisting on a salary freeze, declaring a state of emergency, changing the locks on school buildings, and advertising for replacement teachers *before* a strike vote had even been taken—members of the Greater Albany Education Association (GAEA) decided they needed to make a stand.

GAEA members went on strike for seven hours, and the school district quickly backed down in the face of the teachers' cohesion.

"The unity of our membership gave the bargaining team the juice it needed at the table to get a good settlement," says GAEA President Ron Terhaar.

The speedy settlement included full pay for the day of the strike, which the district agreed to count as an inservice day, and salary increases of between 3 and 6 percent in each of the two years of the new contract.

The agreement also retains and improves the language on evaluations and includes just cause in disciplinary situations—both items the district had insisted could not be included prior to the strike.

WISCONSIN

Contract talks stalled when the Glendale school board insisted on channeling salary dollars to teachers who weren't even hired yet, rather than to current employees. But neither the 84 teachers in this Milwaukee suburban community nor their supporters were interested in waiting the usual four months for an arbitrator's decision on the contract dispute.

Instead, the Glendale-River Hills Education Association went into action—conducting informational picketing, wearing buttons, handing out leaflets, and talking with people in the community.

"The Association represents teachers who are here now, not a new teacher who *may* be hired next year," explains President Richard Best.

Angry parents and teachers assailed board members at one of their meetings, asking, "Why are there dollars for new teachers and not for us who have years of service, who have gone back to school, and who have been giving, giving, giving?"

Parents had their say too: "A great majority of taxpayers are in favor of settling. Your cost-cutting practices are backfiring. Listen to us."

The resistance was effective. The arbitrator never had to rule, because the Association and board reached a voluntary three-year agreement that will boost current teachers' salaries by more than $2,000.

The Association and the board agreed that new teachers could be hired at a salary on the contracted schedule that the board deems necessary. And the two parties ended their dispute amicably, with better communications between the teachers and the board.

VIRGINIA

Through careful planning and hard work, the 283-member Amherst Education Association has started to change the face of education in its district.

Four years ago, the five-member board of supervisors for this rural county voted to cut local school funding by 8.3 percent. AEA reactivated its political action committee, which surveyed the county's registered voters and found they considered education their number one concern and economic development number two.

The Association launched a campaign to play up the link between the two priorities, showing voters how cutting educational quality would hinder economic development. Some of the original cut was restored, but not all of it.

As the November 1987 elections neared, Association members went to work to elect a more pro-education board of supervisors. They made thousands of phone calls, put up yard signs, and concentrated heavily on individual contact, reports PAC chair Ralph Smith.

Result: All five PAC-endorsed candidates—three challengers, one incumbent, and one unopposed candidate—won.

While the situation probably won't change overnight, Smith says, "we do expect these new board members to act in ways consistent with their ideologies and pro-education statements."

FLORIDA

The 6,800 members of the Hillsborough County CTA have voted to affiliate with FTP-NEA. The decision places the Tampa-area organization in the ranks of NEA's 10 largest local affiliates as well as making it the largest affiliate of its state association, FTP-NEA.

HCTA is made up of three units—teachers, paraprofessionals, and secretaries—each with its own board of directors. The boards approved the affiliation unanimously, and in a December mail ballot, 83 percent of members endorsed the decision.

As NEA's first Florida local (chartered in 1928), HCTA was part of a state organization that later gave up NEA affiliation. Seven years ago, HCTA opted for independence.

Now, says HCTA President Dural Raker, "the political climate in the state requires that organizations work together to accomplish the things that have to be done for teachers and education. Because 95 percent of the decisions that affect us are made at the state level, we feel that by joining with FTP-NEA we will greatly increase our influence."

The new move establishes an unbroken band of FTP-NEA affiliates across the rapidly developing central region of the state. □

Newest members of Groton's Educators Hall of Fame: from left, (front row) Ellen I. Grimes, Martha Louise Hudson Walsh, Harry W. Nelson, Elizabeth Wheeler, Mary Virginia M. Goodman, Amelia Palmer; (back row) Dorothy Bailey, Florence D. McGee, Harriett V. Sonk, Mary E. Wilson.

Hall of Fame Inducts New Members

Baseball players and rock and roll stars have one—and now, thanks to their local NEA affiliate, educators in Groton, Conn., have one as well.

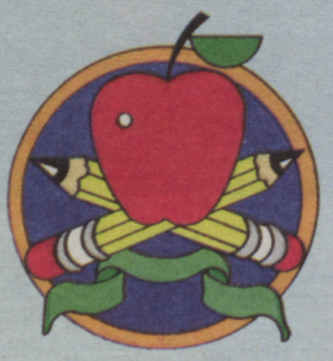
A hall of fame, that is. The Groton Educators' Hall of Fame project, now in its third year, has gone a long way toward "promoting positive feelings toward educators and education in our community," reports Bernard Bartick, the Groton Education Association public relations chair.

For starters, the school board has installed a large plaque with the name of each hall of famer engraved. An album is on display at the superintendent's office containing the names, pictures, and biographies of the 20 Groton educators inducted so far.

The inductions take place at a gala banquet each November, on the Sunday that starts American Education Week. To be eligible for consideration by the Association committee that does the selecting, a person must be a retired teacher, principal, or administrator and must be nominated by at least three community members. Nominators fill out a lengthy form listing the proposed inductee's career experiences, community involvement, and professional organizations, and also supply an essay attesting to his or her contributions to education and the community.

"We hear from a lot of former students, who nominate teachers who changed their lives in some way," notes Bartick. "When these students present the plaque to the person they nominated, the speeches are often quite moving."

Among the 13 latest inductees: Harry Nelson, a retired high school social studies and English teacher whose distinguished career also included public speaking, filmmaking, theatre directing, and poetry writing.



Also elevated to the Hall of Fame in 1987: Mary Virginia Goodman, who built on her more than 43 years of teaching history to become the local historian and—unofficially—"Duchess of Norwalk." □

RESEARCH CLUES

Researchers Rediscover Rural School Strengths

by Robert McNergney and Martin Haberman

One-third of all U.S. teachers practice in rural schools. Half of all public schools, and two-thirds of all school districts, are in rural settings. These schools educate about a fourth of the nation's students.

Yet a preoccupation with suburban and particularly urban schools has long diverted our attention from academic life in rural America. How and why have we neglected rural schools for so long?

In the early part of this century, small schools were targeted for reform—not because they were deficient pedagogically, but because they were considered to be less intellectually stimulating than their urban counterparts and financially and administratively dysfunctional. With larger schools, it was argued, there could be a variety of courses and programs. And larger schools also afforded opportunities for creating integrated, multicultural environments.

But the consolidation of small rural districts into larger units that's been taking place for the past half century "may have been a move in the wrong direction," contend Herbert J. Walberg, a research professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and William J. Fowler of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

When it comes to schools, bigger is *not* necessarily better, Walberg and Fowler say. Taking into account school districts' socioeconomic status and per-student expenditures, their research suggests that smaller school districts have higher levels of student achievement than larger districts.

Why? Walberg and Fowler think the success of smaller districts may be due to "superintendent and central staff awareness of citizen and parent preferences, absence of bureaucratic layers and administrative complexity, teacher involvement in decision making, and close home-school relations."

As education researchers increasingly take a new, more favorable look at rural schools, certain characteristics that were previously considered shortcomings are being redefined as virtues. James Coleman's recent study of Catholic schools, for example, concludes that urban schools must return to providing an atmosphere of community and family rarely found in today's urban environments. Create schools-within-schools, Coleman urges. Subdivide large, impersonal urban schools into "families" of 250 to 300 students. Give teachers opportunities to know their students on a personal basis. Such intimate knowledge, of course, is the meat and potatoes of rural education.

Size is only one of the issues that concern researchers and policymakers interested in rural schools. Alan DeYoung, a University of Kentucky associate professor of sociology and education, worries about past neglect of school problems that seem uniquely rural, but welcomes the signs of a fresh sense of scholarly and political purpose in the field.

Bob Riha, Jr.

America's rural schools, long neglected by researchers and education policymakers alike, are special, with their own set of problems and advantages.

Researchers are now pushing for better data bases on rural schools to inform inquiry and policy, DeYoung points out. They're also identifying the problems of rural schools from the points of view of those who inhabit these schools.

Today, state education departments and citizen groups are trying to shape school reform efforts in rural areas in ways that make sense to the schools and the communities in which they're embedded. Often this means linking school development with the local economy.

One recent study suggests that rural communities can help ensure their future by focusing public school curriculum and extracurricular activities on small-business development projects rather than on distant national needs.

The message implicit in the evolving literature on rural schools is one of cautious optimism. Some people are beginning to recognize—and others are remembering—that rural schools are special. Their problems are different in quality and kind from those faced by their urban counterparts. Realizing that solutions, too, may need to be different is a sign not of parochialism or intransigence but of reason.

Thanks to new communication technologies, old ideas of social and psychological isolation in rural settings are becoming obsolete. These technologies, coupled with the diversity and strength of character of many rural communities, may soon persuade us that it's a matter not just of "solving rural problems"—but of emulating the best that rural schools have to offer. □

Want To Know More?

This column is based on "The Status of American Rural Education Research: An Integrated Review and Commentary," by Alan J. DeYoung, in *Review of Educational Research*, summer 1987, and "Expenditure and Size Efficiencies of Public School Districts," by Herbert J. Walberg and William J. Fowler, in *Educational Researcher*, October 1987.

Robert McNergney is associate professor at the Curry School of Education, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22903; Martin Haberman is professor at the School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI 53201. They prepared this column for NEA Today *with the cooperation of the American Educational Research Association. They welcome reader reactions.*

TECH TALK

What Ever Happened to the Computer Revolution?

by Henry Kepner, Jr.

"*What* computer revolution?" you may well be wondering. Even though the number of computers in U.S. classrooms has tripled since 1984 (more than a million now, compared to 325,000 then), the computer learning revolution predicted back in the early 1980s just hasn't happened.

The computer industry promised more to parents and students than educators could ever deliver. At the same time, the industry has largely ignored the body of research on learning and instruction that could make the technology so much more useful in the classroom.

Henry Kepner, Jr., is a professor of curriculum and instruction at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee. He's the author of numerous books and articles about school computer use.

Still, we can't lay all the blame for the slow pace of school-based technological change on the computer industry. We could be doing much more with computers in schools if it weren't for three other basic limitations.

First, schools aren't doing enough to help teachers become familiar and comfortable with computers. I don't believe teachers gain personal confidence in using the computer as a powerful, productive instructional tool until they've assimilated it into their own daily work routine.

In many schools where computers are available to students, the school board or administration hasn't seen fit to make hardware and software (for example, word processors, progress report and grade-book programs, poster makers, test item banks) or high-quality printers available to teachers. How can we expect students to view computer literacy as an important educational goal if they don't see teachers using computers for tasks that students are told are enhanced by computers?

To put computer technology to work, schools must provide in-service training at least equal to that required for successful individualized instruction and team teaching. Actually, computer technology requires even *more* training if teachers are to achieve both technical and instructional competence.

A second barrier to effective use of computers is the obsolete hardware that's often on the school site. School budget planners often view computers and related equipment as one-time purchases. Many classroom computers are already outdated, with limited memory capacity, slow processors, and few special features such as color, sound, or voice output.

Schools' stand-alone microcomputers typically lack instructional management packages. Students handle disks excessively rather than networking with a software library. Typically, access to work stations is also limited, with just one or two computers in a classroom or a physically remote computer lab.

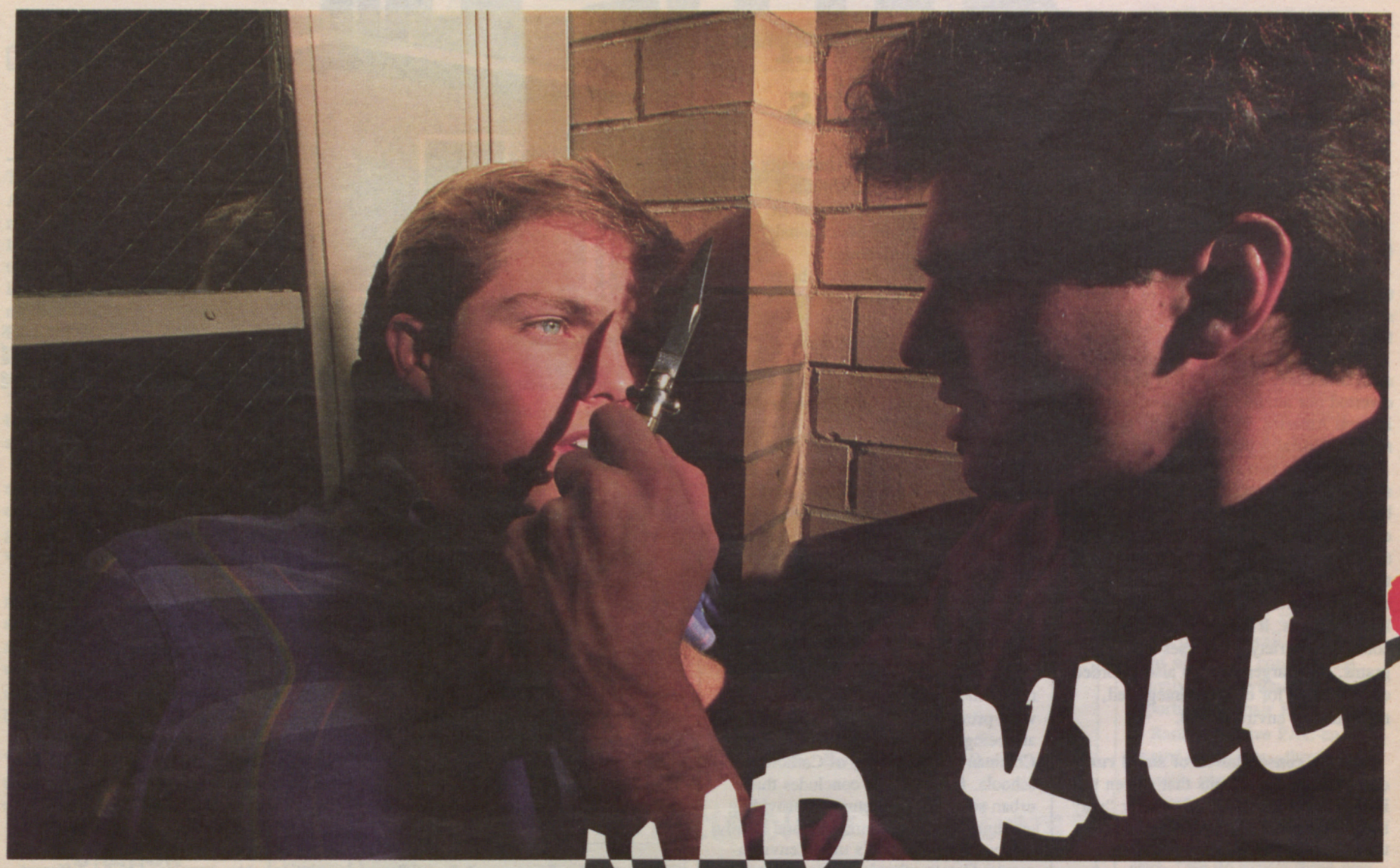
Many of the schools that entered the computer age first are now suffering with outdated machines that can't run the newest, most innovative software. So these schools may not be able to take advantage of the newest and most sophisticated computer applications in instruction, diagnostics, student monitoring, and administrative control.

Finally, there's a third problem: neither educators nor computer programmers know enough about how to write instructional software that will be effective in more than a drill or retention mode.

Producing instructional material that can interact with the learner is a complex challenge. Innovators cannot even agree upon a philosophical direction to take. Should we try to develop computer-based instructional sequences that work for all students? Those who recall the infamous "teacher-proof" instructional programs of the 1960s and '70s don't tend to think so. Or should we pursue the dream of those who are researching artificial intelligence—building instructional programs to fit what we know about each student's thought processes?

Despite the obstacles I've outlined, we *are* learning to use computers effectively in the schools. But that's a subject for another column! □

STUDENTS



KIDS WHO KILL

Schools face few challenges more pressing than youth homicide—the killing of young people by other young people. Poverty has always spawned high homicide rates. Can schools do anything to bring those high rates down? That's the question school staffers—and even doctors—are now addressing.

Youth homicide rates have nearly doubled in the past 20 years. In fact, homicide rates for young adults 15 to 24 years old have jumped so abruptly that they mar otherwise substantial declines in the rates of death from all causes—especially for Blacks—in this age group.

It used to be that the leading cause of death among young people was accidents—mostly auto accidents. In 1962 accidents were still the leading cause of death for both Blacks and whites 15- to 24-years-old. But by 1982, the homicide rate for young Blacks had increased so much (from 29.1 to 47.1 deaths per 100,000) and the accident rate decreased so much (from 56.7 to 34.5 deaths per 100,000) that homicide had replaced accidents as the leading cause of death for young Blacks.

With death by homicide an increasingly common event for students, it's not surprising that in recent years, in many faculty lounges, when the talk turns to homicide, the subjects come from real life, not Agatha Christie.

The obvious question is, Why are our young people more likely to be murdered now than in the past? To answer that, it helps to know *who* is doing the murdering.

"Statistically, the killers of school-aged children are *not* for the most part sick strangers or abusive parents or criminals in the process of committing a felony, or bullies of another race," explains James Mercy, chief of the Intentional Injury Section of the federal government's Centers for Disease Control (CDC), in Atlanta.

Rather, Mercy reports, "The killers of school-aged children are mostly other young people like themselves."

After about age 12 and continuing through young adulthood, homicide victims are more likely to be killed by acquaintances than by anybody else.

So the question changes to, Why are young people more likely to be involved in homicide as victims *and offenders* than they were 20 years ago?

One reason may be that young people today engage in more high-risk behavior than ever before. They use drugs and alcohol, drive fast, carry loaded weapons. Other generations have done these things, too, but not in such great proportions, at such early ages, and so often.

Two sources of risk that researchers on youth homicide are especially zeroing in on are the increased availability of firearms and the increased use of alcohol. Kids who carry a weapon and then get high are much more likely to turn on another kid—or kill themselves—when something goes wrong.

Another "risk" that correlates strongly with youth homicide is poverty. In fact, says Nollie Wood, a social scientist at Johns Hopkins University, "When socioeconomic status is controlled for, racial differences in homicide rates pretty much wash out."

As the CDC's James Mercy explains it, "The historical pattern of homicide in the U.S. has been high rates among poor people, especially poor young men."

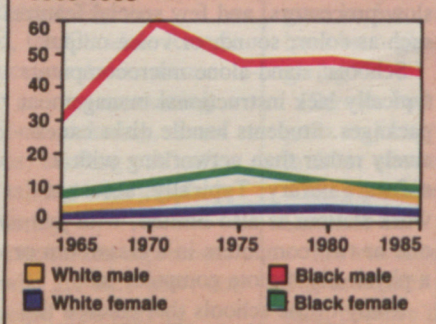
Homicide rates for young Black men have generally been declining since about 1970. However, from 1984 to 1985, the rate for Black men 15 to 24 years old went *up* from 61.5 to 66.1 deaths per 100,000. Most of that increase occurred among the 15- to 19-year-olds, whose homicide rate went up 18 percent—from 39.3 to 46.4 deaths per 100,000.

"Today's homicide rates for young Black men," Mercy says, "are already unacceptable. And if the 1985 increase signals a trend, that's very serious."

In 1980 the U.S. Public Health Service decided to attack youth homicide as a public health rather than criminal justice problem. The PHS set as its first goal reducing the homicide rate for

"I just read that a student I knew last year was arrested for murder in a drug case. He'd had all the right services from the school, but his probation for another crime ended and he dropped out."
—Marjorie Spirer, president, Prince George's County (Md.) Educators Association

Homicides* of 15- to 19-Year-Olds, 1965-1985

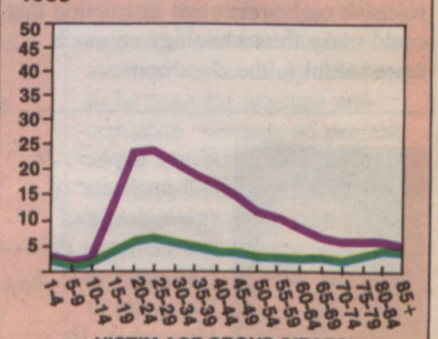


In 1960, 1970, 1975 rates labeled "Black male" and "Black female" are for nonwhite males and nonwhite females respectively.

*deaths per 100,000 youths

Source: National Center for Health Statistics

Homicide Rates* by Age and Sex, 1985



*deaths per 100,000

Source: National Center for Health Statistics

STUDENTS

AND ARE KILLED

young Black men aged 15-24, which then stood at 72.0 per 100,000, to 60 per 100,000 by 1990.

One of the first health professionals to tackle homicide as a disease was Deborah Prothrow-Stith, M.D., a specialist in internal medicine who is now state health commissioner in Massachusetts. A decade ago, Prothrow-Stith was a medical student working in the emergency room at Boston City Hospital.

"Every weekend I would suture up and then release these young men who came in with gunshot and knife wounds," she recalls. "One of them told me, 'If you want more practice, don't go to bed, because I'm going to send in the person who did this to me.'"

Homicides among young people are most often the result of arguments between acquaintances. So to break what was obviously a vicious cycle, Prothrow-Stith and associates at the hospital developed a Violence Prevention Curriculum for tenth grade health classes that would teach kids how to express anger in useful ways rather than in violence. (For more information, write Education Development Center, Publishing, 55 Chapel St., Newton, MA 02160.)

The curriculum is still being tested nationwide, but a three-year study in a predominantly Black Boston high school showed improved knowledge about the causes of violence on the part of participants—and an apparent one-third reduction in their suspension rate for violent incidents.

Prothrow-Stith and others in public health see a need for a multidisciplinary, interagency attack on youth homicide. An anti-violence curriculum cannot, for example, substitute for police efforts to reduce the gun supply or monitor street gang activity.

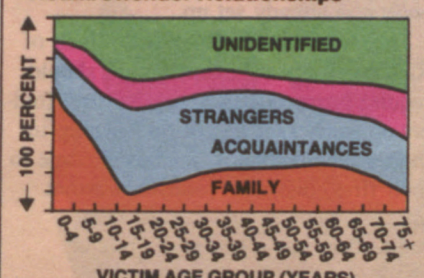
In Detroit, where the rate of shootings of children worked out to one a day in 1986, city recreation director Charles Lewis sees a role for his department.

"The violence we're trying to cope with results from the inability of kids to deal with unstructured time in a positive, socially acceptable way," Lewis contends. "With high unemployment rates, inner-city minority teenagers just have too much free time."

The recent wave of school reform has reduced emphasis on education for living, Lewis suggests. "It's time for education systems, both formal and informal, to reemphasize helping kids develop a well-rounded lifestyle."

Last spring Lewis's department began a leisure education project in 44 elementary and middle schools that stresses using free time wisely—and involves parents as well as children.

Who Kills Whom at Different Ages: Sorting Out Homicides According to Victim/Offender Relationships*



*Proportion of homicides with specified victim-offender relationships, by victim age; United States, 1976-79

Source: Centers for Disease Control, from data in FBI *Uniform Crime Reports*.

It's easy—too easy—to think of youths who kill as beyond help. If they'll commit murder at age 12, the reasoning goes, what hope can there be for them? But most of these kids can be helped, and their teachers know that.

Helen Bernstein, a counselor at Los Angeles' Marshall High School who almost witnessed a (nonfatal) knifing, has gang members on her list of counselees.

"The kids in the gangs are good kids when you deal with them as individuals, outside the gangs," Bernstein explains. "We know who the gang members are, and sometimes it seems that if we could target school, parent, and community efforts at just these kids, we could bring an end to all this violence."

Tom La Barbera

"As I went over to some students who were fighting, I saw one student hand something to another student, who pocketed it. It turned out to be the knife the first kid had used to stab a kid who was lying on the floor."

—United Teachers-Los Angeles member Helen Bernstein, a counselor at Marshall High School

Reducing youth homicide will take that kind of coordination—a lot of it. As with other social ills, schools can't begin to do the job alone. But they do have a part to play with other agencies in designing and executing aggressive homicide reduction programs. What schools must *not* do is to remain passive in the face of problems that shape their students' lives.

—Nancy R. Needham

Violence at School

There is no national body count, but homicide on school grounds seems—fortunately—to be very rare. California collects data on school crime, and in 1985-86 reported a total of three on-campus, school-related homicides—two with student victims.

There are, however, national statistics on crimes that often precede homicide: assault and weapons possession. So it's possible to ask if schools are safer—that is, do they report fewer assaults and weapons offenses—now than, say, 15 years ago, when the first national study on school violence was done?

Oliver Moles, a researcher with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement, has pulled together statistics from several sources to answer this question. Interestingly, of 10 city school districts Moles contacted for data, only four provided him with usable statistics.

"Five others either had no annual statistics available," Moles says, "or did not send what they said they had after repeated inquiries." So much for school districts' willingness to seek self-knowledge.

Nonetheless, Moles concludes that—

► Nationally, the rate of *assaults* on secondary students showed little change from 1973 to 1985. Even so, at a rate of 190 assaults per 100,000 students in 1985, that meant at least 38,000 U.S. secondary students were assaulted at school that year.

► A "large increase in *weapons use and possession*" in the two large cities he studied "is cause for alarm."

Other studies indicate that 14 to 25 percent of students in secondary schools fear for their safety. Gallup polls in 1977 and 1985 found that 3 to 4 percent of teenagers said they'd been physically attacked at school.

Violence also occurs against school staff, although homicides are rare. In 1985-86, 3,000 assaults were made on California school employees during school hours—76 percent of them by students.

NEA has periodically polled teachers about physical attacks by students. Analyzing NEA poll responses from 1973 to 1983, Moles suggests that the rates of physical attacks on teachers were at least 50 percent higher in 1979-83 than in 1973-78. (Attacks per 100,000 teachers ranged between 2,400 and 3,300 in 1973-78, and between 4,600 and 5,700 in 1979-83).

More recently, teachers responding to NEA's Member Opinion Poll report even higher rates of attack. Attacks per 100,000 teachers stood at 4,000 in 1984, 3,000 in 1985, and 8,000 in 1986.

Doug Hoke

Oklahoma City school police Sgt. C. R. Sampson

Though it isn't clear whether schools are any safer—especially for teachers and other staff—in 1988 than in 1973, many school districts have created police forces of their own to try to make them so.

Richard Green, a 26-year veteran of the Los Angeles Police Department, is chief of the Los Angeles Unified School District's police department. Green has a staff of 300, including 146 plainclothes officers, 90 uniformed officers who patrol in marked cars, and a $13 million slice from the school district's $3.3 billion budget pie. All his officers are armed. They can make their own arrests and book suspects at local police stations.

Like many school security forces, the LAUSD police use a perimeter or closed campus approach to control access to school buildings. A combination of fences and locked gates is intended to force would-be visitors to come in through the front door. (Teachers say kids come over the fences.)

Green says assaults have been cut in half since the perimeter system was installed. But also crucial in reducing school crime, he contends, was the school board's recent move to make it easier for principals to expel students caught selling narcotics, carrying weapons, or committing assaults on campus.

But school security is expensive. Green has seen the LA Unified force drop by attrition from 400 to 300 positions. In Oklahoma City, where the school budget is especially tight, staff cuts are even steeper.

Association member Curtis Ray Sampson, a police veteran and sergeant in Oklahoma City's school security force, explains the implications of a smaller force: "We have 105 schools, but our staff has gone from 38 officers to 15. We can't be seen at middle schools as much as before. Which is too bad, because 13- to 14-year-olds are more likely to be into drugs and violence than 16- to 17-year-olds."

Sometimes the new attention to school security has had bizarre—and tragic—effects on teachers. The large unnamed West Coast school system that sent data to Moles reported a big increase in the number of assaults on students by *adults*—from 197 in 1984-85 to 813 in 1985-86. Moles was told the jump was caused by child abuse cases being filed against teachers. An Association member on the West Coast says teachers have been accused of child abuse when they try to step in and break up fights.

—N.R.N.

READER POLL RESULTS

NEA Members Cite Teacher Training Gaps

When last October's *NEA Today* asked readers whether their teacher preparation left some important gap, they responded emphatically. Yes.

An overwhelming number cited lack of adequate classroom experience. Dunnie Wright, who now teaches sixth grade in Whitwell, Tenn., laments not being aware as a fledgling social studies teacher that secondary school teachers need to teach basic reading skills.

Patricia Kirk of Lakewood, Colo., is one of many who missed having the chance to observe real situations and teachers' dialogues with students, parents, and administrators.

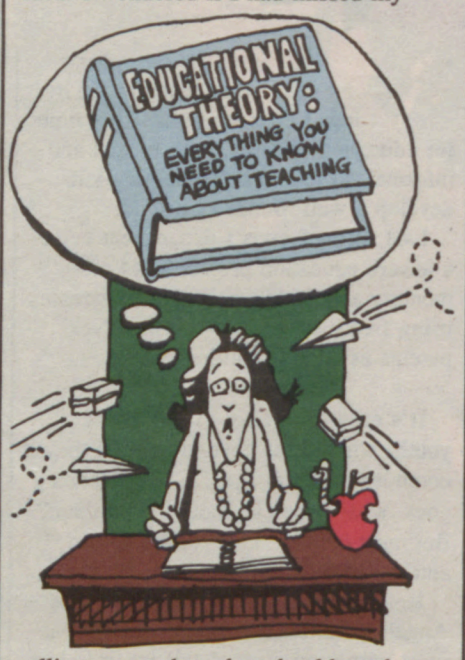
New Jersey art teacher Schuyler Dawson says she would have benefited from videos of successful teachers demonstrating motivation, discipline, and other favorite techniques and of students trying out skills, along with role playing of art room discipline situations.

Many teachers wish they'd known more about discipline before entering their first classroom. Rosemarie Dion of Lemon Grove, Calif., says she started teaching junior high English and reading with strong intellectual preparation, enthusiasm, and too little else.

"My students ran amuck," Dion remembers, "and I was a mess. I learned quickly that it wasn't enough to love my subject matter. That year brought very few of the 'teachable moments' I'd heard of in the university." Dion, who now teaches on the elementary and the university levels, says the sting of disappointment over her inability to manage her students that first year haunts her still.

Discipline problems have made many teachers doubt their own competence. Writes Susan Kopp of Bonita, Calif.: "We were assured that lessons would go well as long as the teacher taught correctly. The teacher had to make the course *interesting*; this would naturally assure that the kids would be very receptive and well-behaved. Surprise!"

Jack Nims of Cotulla, Texas, also was taught that students misbehaved because they were bored. "As a first-year teacher," he says, "I bought into that idea. I wondered if I had missed my



calling—a good teacher should not have discipline problems." He quickly learned that "there are several reasons students misbehave, and boredom is only one."

Georgia Eshelman of North Canton, Ohio, says she didn't get any positive discipline, behavior modification, assertive discipline, or nonconfrontational techniques in college—they were considered "insufficiently theoretical." But, notes Eshelman, "When I'm facing a classroom of 20 or more young people, more than a few of whom are more ready to fight than study, I need the practical, not the theoretical."

Many teachers wish they'd received more training in how to organize their classes and survive in the school structure. New Jersey art teacher Leonard Irwin wishes he'd been taught how to estimate next year's supplies with no enrollment figures; keep track throughout the year of what has arrived, what is back-ordered, what is the wrong color, size, or quantity, and what is lost; deal with the administrator who complains about all the stuff that has to be stored under tables, on windowsills, and in corners; and conduct a comprehensive, multitiered program in a room too small for a decent drawing class.

Other teachers also had some very practical suggestions. Bruce Armstrong of Liberty, Ind., said he graduated totally unprepared to set up a grade book and grading system—he'd done his student teaching second semester, when the book was already set up.

Biology teacher Vivien McAninch of Richmond, Ky., thinks colleges should require prospective teachers to start folders on every unit they'll be teaching in their academic major, so they'll come to their first class with pictures, current articles, puzzles, and sample tests, rather than just a text and a box of chalk.

NEA members have also found specific methods missing from their preparation. John Andrews of St. Bernard, La., says that his training to teach Spanish and French didn't include enough training in specific activities to get the language across to young students.

Donna Craig of Hadley, Pa., reports she started out learning phonics instruction the night before she taught it to her first grade class. Craig is now a Chapter 1 reading specialist.

Some teachers mentioned aspects of their personality they've had to develop on the job. Sally Riewald of Tacoma, Wash., is now a program specialist for students at risk. She could have benefited, she says, from more realistic expectations for herself—"I was not a failure for not being able to magically 'fix' a 16-year-old illiterate in one year."

Karen Herchen of Franklin, N.C., would have liked some self-awareness as part of her preparation. She later realized "I couldn't 'get to' the students if I hadn't even scratched my own surface."

Several teachers mentioned that working with parents doesn't always come naturally—and should have been part of their teacher education. As Polly Gustems of New Milford, Conn., puts it: "The voices of happy parents can easily be heard spreading the news of exciting things that happen in your school." And vice versa.

Finally, teachers weren't the only NEA members to send in ideas about better teacher preparation. Paula Lindamood, an aide in Sanford, Fla., writes, "Every teacher should know the basic formula for using any type of machine found in a school—basic copy machine, laminator, projector, media equipment." And—"a new teacher should be put in an aide position for a week." The teachers she works with respect her opinions, Lindamood says, but "not all aides can say this."

—Jane Power

RESOURCES

TV/Radio Tips

Ethnic Notions—*PBS, Monday, Feb. 1, 10-11 p.m.* ET. Actress Ester Rolle narrates a voyage through American history, tracing deeply rooted stereotypes that have fueled anti-Black prejudice.

Music from Africa to the Americas—*National Public Radio, Tuesdays, Feb. 2 through Feb. 23; check local station schedules for broadcast times.* Four weekly half-hour "Horizons" broadcasts honor African Heritage Month, exploring how traditional African music has found its way to various parts of the Americas.

Gandhi—*Arts & Entertainment Channel, Tuesday, Feb. 2, 8-9 p.m. ET (rebroadcast midnight-1 a.m. ET and Sunday, Feb. 7, 2-3 p.m. ET).* The life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi as documented and witnessed by British journalist-author James Cameron.

Black History Film Festival—*The Disney Channel, Tuesday, Feb. 2, 9-11 p.m. ET:* "Charlotte Forten's Mission," starring Melba Moore; *Sunday, Feb. 7, 9-11 p.m. ET, Monday, Feb. 15, 8-10 p.m. ET, and Saturday, Feb. 20, 3-5 p.m. ET:* "Sandburg's Lincoln," starring Hal Holbrook; *Tuesday, Feb. 9, 9-11 p.m. ET:* "Booker," the story of Booker T. Washington, starring Lavar Burton; *Tuesday, Feb. 16, 9-11 p.m. ET:* "Sounder," starring Cicely Tyson; *Tuesday, Feb. 23, 3-5 p.m. ET:* "Solomon Northup's Odyssey," starring Avery Brooks.

All Creatures Great and Small—*Arts & Entertainment Channel, Thursdays, 8-9 p.m. ET (rebroadcast midnight-1 a.m. ET and Sundays, 7-8 p.m. ET).* New series of 10 episodes based on previously unpublished writings of James Herriot premieres Feb. 4, bringing the heartwarming story of this Yorkshire veterinarian into the early 1950s.

Hitler—*Arts & Entertainment Channel, Tuesday, Feb. 9, 8-9 p.m. ET, rebroadcast same day, midnight-1 a.m. ET and Sunday, Feb. 14, 6-7 p.m. ET.* Journalist Kingsley Martin presents his personal assessment of the life and times of Adolph Hitler.

Australia's Twilight of the Dreamtime—*PBS, Wednesday, Feb. 10, 8-9 p.m. ET.* National Geographic special looks at Australia's aboriginal culture.

The Olympics—*ABC-TV, Saturday, Feb. 13 through Sunday, Feb. 28; check local listings for times.* The 1988 Winter Olympic games from Calgary, Alberta.

Anne of Green Gables—*PBS, Saturdays, Feb. 20 (Parts 1 and 2) and Feb. 27 (Parts 3 and 4); check local listings for times.* Encore of award-winning series about the adventures of orphan Anne Shirley, based on the book by L.M. Montgomery.

Weekend Special: Runaway Ralph—*ABC-TV, Sundays, Feb. 21, 1-1:30 p.m. ET, and Feb. 28, 1-1:30 p.m. ET.* Two-part adaptation of the best-selling children's book of the same name about a loquacious mouse who develops a friendship with a lonely boy.

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes—*Disney Channel, Sundays, beginning Feb. 21, 9-10 p.m. ET.* Brilliant acting and stunning sets bring Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's mysteries to life in this 13-week series starring Jeremy Brett and David Burke.

Two Dollars and a Dream—*PBS, Monday, Feb. 22, 10-11 p.m. ET.* Biography of Madame C. J. Walker, America's first self-made female millionaire, and her daughter, A'Lelia Walker, Black America's patron of the Harlem Renaissance.

Tom Sawyer—*Arts & Entertainment Channel, Sunday, Feb. 28, 9-11 p.m. ET. Rebroadcast Monday, Feb. 29, 1-3 a.m. ET.* A musical version of the Mark Twain classic starring Johnny Whitaker, Celeste Holm, and Jodie Foster.

Moments Without Proper Names—*PBS, Monday, Feb. 29, 10-11 p.m.* An intimate portrait of photographer-writer-director-composer Gordon Parks, including some of his prize-winning photos and news and documentary footage tracing major events in his life.

Noble House—*NBC-TV; check local listings for dates and times.* Eight-hour miniseries about romance, intrigue, and international power struggles in contemporary Hong Kong, based on James Clavell's novel of the same name. John Houseman, Gordon Jackson, and Nancy Kwan star. □

High School Teachers: Try for NBC Awards

Do you use TV news as a tool for teaching high school students about the role and responsibilities of a free press? If so, NBC-TV invites you to vie for one of its new National Teachers' Awards. The 10 teachers judged to have the most effective TV news projects will win $1,000 each. Judging will be by a panel of experts appointed by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, which is cosponsoring the competition.

To enter, submit a four- to six-page essay about your project and photocopies of the two best samples of your students' work on it, by May 13. For an application form and more information, contact NBC National Teachers' Awards, c/o The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 5 Ivy Lane, Princeton, NJ 08540. □

INTERNATIONAL

Reshaping Impressions of the USSR

by Don Cameron, NEA Executive Director

Five NEA officials visited the Soviet Union this past fall as guests of the Education and Scientific Workers Union. Everywhere they went, they discovered an overwhelming concern about world peace.

When Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and President Reagan signed the INF Treaty—mandating the first-ever reduction of nuclear weapons by the two superpowers—most Americans were enthusiastic. At the same time, many were surprised at the General Secretary's repeated references to the importance of world peace.

For me and several other NEA leaders who had recently returned from the Soviet Union, Gorbachev's pronouncements were no surprise.

An NEA delegation visited the USSR this past fall at the invitation of the Education and Scientific Workers Union (ESWU).

Led by NEA Secretary-Treasurer Roxanne Bradshaw, our group also included Dennis Giordano, president of the New Jersey Education Association; Eva Patrick, NEA director from Pennsylvania; Gene Dryer, NEA Northeast regional director; and me.

Between Sept. 28 and Oct. 12, we visited three cities: Moscow, the Soviet capital, in the center of the country; Leningrad, the "Venice of the North," near Finland; and Nalchik, a resort area in the southern part of the USSR.

Throughout those two weeks, a long parade of events reshaped and reframed our ideas of the USSR. We felt smug when previous notions were confirmed, embarrassed when we had to discard superficial stereotypes.

As soon as we were comfortably settled in Moscow, we and our ESWU colleagues started digging into a mound of topics. They were eager to answer our questions—and we had a prodigious supply. We pressed our hosts about political dissidents, the KGB, Afghanistan, Jewish refuseniks, Gorbachev, Khrushchev, Stalin, Lenin, family life, alcoholism, living conditions, working conditions, traffic conditions, wages, Aeroflot, music (from rock to punk to the classics), sports, history, the Bolshoi Ballet, students, teachers, schools, grades, homework, and the relationship of trade unions (including ESWU) to the Soviet government.

For their part, our hosts (and virtually everyone else we met) were eager to discuss three topics: *perestroika* (restructuring), *glasnost* (openness), and *mir* (peace). Mostly, they talked about peace.

Memories of the USSR: young and old, in school or in line to buy groceries, Soviet citizens love to talk to American visitors about world peace.

Don Cameron

We were eager to see schools, and on our first morning in Moscow we visited a center-city middle school that specialized in the English language. The students, somewhat tentative at first, soon were bombarding us with questions in English about everything from our familiarity with Russian authors, musicians, and poets to Elvis Presley, Western movies, and Billy Joel (who had just been in Moscow).

Soviet schools have 10 grades, called forms, which roughly correspond to the 12 grades in American schools. Children begin school at the age of seven and attend classes five and a half days a week. Students told us that in the later grades they average two or three hours of homework a night.

Beginning in third form, Russian students study both Russian and English. (Since most of the USSR's 15 republics have native languages other than Russian, many students study their native language in addition.) Consequently, most Soviet citizens under the age of 35 or so speak at least some English.

Here was a troubling reality: the ability of so many Soviets to speak a foreign language gives the USSR a decided edge in the world's political and economic marketplace. All that talk about education being the path to revitalized American competitiveness began to seem somewhat ironic, given the low priority we place on teaching foreign languages—especially Russian. The USSR has more teachers of English than the USA has students of Russian.

Everywhere we went, we talked to people—in stores, on the street, in museums, at theaters or concerts. The Soviets love to talk about things on their minds—but mostly both children and adults want to discuss peace.

When we went to the circus, the theme of the performance was world peace. When we visited schools, the teachers and students were anxious to discuss peace. We met representatives from the Children for Peace movement, including Katya Lycheva, the mother of the girl who visited the United States last year as Samantha Smith's counterpart.

The ESWU leaders also talked of peace. They were interested not only in arms reduction negotiations, but in how our two organizations could work together for world peace.

Time and again we were asked, "Do Americans really believe the Soviet Union would start a nuclear war?" Our response was invariably affirmative, which almost invariably provoked the shaking of Soviet heads in disbelief.

We, of course, volleyed by asking if Soviets really believe that America would start a nuclear war. The response was always quick—yes. We were often reminded that the United States is the only nation that's ever actually used nuclear weapons.

The Soviets' paranoia is also based on their experience in World War II, when over 20 million of them perished—two-thirds as many as in all other Allied countries combined. To young Americans, World War II is a distant memory of a distant conflict—but it's a vivid reality to Soviets of all ages. Almost everyone we met had a relative who died in the war.

When I heard we were to visit a memorial cemetery to the citizens of Leningrad who died in World War II, I envisioned something akin to the somber beauty of Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, or perhaps the serene elegance of the military cemetery on the island of Oahu. I was not prepared for what we encountered.

The cemetery contains the graves of some 720,000 Leningrad residents who perished, mostly by starvation, in the siege of the city. From September 1941 to January 1944, Hitler's army cut off all supplies of food, clothing, and medicine. No one could get in or out.

The day we went to the cemetery visitors numbered in the thousands: young children carefully bundled from head to toe against the chill, old people proudly displaying their medals on suitcoats or sweaters, teenagers in punk regalia, young men in uniform. All took the visit seriously; all seemed to have a keen appreciation for the sacrifice made by those buried within the cemetery's walls.

At a small, crowded museum near the entrance, we walked in almost silent procession past black-and-white photographs from the siege: haunting pictures of emaciated men, women, and children struggling to live but clearly starving; of people clearing rubble or erecting makeshift hovels although almost too weak to move. The Leningrad teachers told us about fathers forcing their children to drink machine oil in futile efforts to avoid starvation—and about people eating roots, plaster, bark, and rats. We saw a sample of the daily food ration given each citizen—a 1″ by 3″ by 1″ cube of bread made with half flour, half sawdust.

We also heard the story of Dmitri Shostakovich's "Leningrad Symphony,' No. 7. To raise the morale of the desperate citizens, Shostakovich composed a symphony to be performed especially for them and recorded for use in heartening all the Soviet troops fighting the Nazis. Before the December 1943 premiere, orchestra members were sent to the hospital for several days and fed additional rations to build up their strength so they could play.

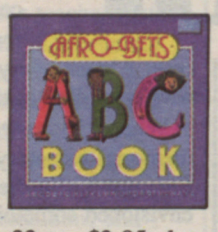
When it comes to today's war and peace questions, the USSR offers exasperating, if fascinating, contradictions. Its government, founded in revolution, has a long history of military interventions in other countries; yet its current officials and citizens talk with conviction of advancing the cause of world peace, of nuclear weapons reductions, of summit meetings.

The NEA delegation to the Soviet Union can't explain this contradiction, but we did verify that it exists. Perhaps that's not a good place to be—but it's a place to start. And perhaps the treaty signed by President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev symbolizes that beginning. □

RESOURCES

Free or Inexpensive

BLACK STUDIES



Afro-Bets ABC Book. Cheryl Willis Hudson. Illustrates the letters of the alphabet and words made from the letters with scenes from the African and Black American experience. 23 pp. $3.95 plus $1 p&h. Just Us Productions, 301 Main St., Suite 22-24, Orange, NJ 07050.

Booker T. Washington and the "Atlanta Compromise," with Louis Harlan. Reproduces on audiotape a recording made by Booker T. Washington in 1906 of his famous 1895 speech. Also contains a discussion by historian Louis Harlan, Washington's Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer, who takes a critical look at the Black leader's decision to pursue jobs and education rather than civil rights for Blacks. A booklet gives the text of the speech, summarizes Harlan's comments, and reproduces photos of Washington and other Black leaders of his time. Tape (one side), $7 postpaid. Booklet (13 pp.), $2.50 postpaid. Allen Enterprises, Rt. 1, Box 281C, Sharpsburg, MD 21782.

***GRIO'*, Vol. 3.** Discusses the U.S. Constitution and famous Black Americans of the late 18th century. 84 pp. $9.95, plus $1.95 p&h. Free with each order, a 12" x 18" poster, "Pursuit of Happiness: Blacks in the U.S. Constitution." By credit card charge at 1/800/426-0882 (in Pennsylvania, 215/877-9409) or by mail from GRIO', The Praise Singer, P.O. Box 685, Holmes, PA 19043.

1988 Black History Month Poster. A poster in red, black, and green entitled "The Light Shines Through/Black History Month February 1988." 16" x 20". $3.50 plus $1.50 p&h. Ask about p&h rates on multiple orders. Prepay or use school purchase order. ROD Enterprises, Inc. P.O. Box 50472, Pasadena, CA 91105, 818/799-1795.

WOMEN'S STUDIES

Reclaiming the Past, Rewriting the Future: An Elementary Curriculum Unit. Claudia McKnight. Gives brief biographies of contemporary women eminent in eight different fields and suggests local activities to acquaint both boys and girls with issues and career options in the same fields. $5.95 plus $2 p&h. Prepay by check, use purchase order, or charge to VISA/MC/AE. For $1 more, get the 1988 women's history resource catalog. National Women's History Project, P.O. Box 3716, Santa Rosa, CA 95402.

Celebrate Women. Poster lists names, dates, and achievements of more than 700 American women from colonial times to the present. 37" x 24". $10 each; 20 or more, $8 each. NEA members, 20 percent off. Celebrate Women, 701 Roxboro Rd., Rockville, MD 20850.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Learning Disabilities: Issues and Instructional Interventions. Clayton E. Keller and Daniel P. Hallahan. Gives an overview of the current state of knowledge about what learning disabilities are and how schools can deal with learning disabled students. 32 pp. $2.95. Stock no. 1076-0-00-D. NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516.

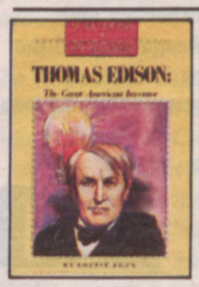
LANGUAGE ARTS

Recommended English Language Arts Curriculum Guides, K-12. Contains brief summary descriptions of the best English curriculums evaluated in 1985-87 by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills and the National Council of Teachers of English (ERIC/RCS—NCTE), and available through the ERIC system. $3; NCTE members, $2.25. Stock no. 39515-015. ERIC/RCS—NCTE, 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana, IL 61801.

READING

When We Were Young: Favorite Books of RIF Kids, RIF Volunteers, and Readers of Renown. Reading Is Fundamental. Names the favorite childhood books of RIF program participants (kids), their program volunteers (adults), and famous people ranging from Alan Alda to Detroit Mayor Coleman Young. 35 pp. $1.50 p&h. Use check or money order. Ask about bulk mailing rates. RIF, P.O. Box 23444, Washington, DC 20026.

SCIENCE/BIOGRAPHY



Thomas Edison: The Great American Inventor. Louise Egan. This volume in Barron's new biography series, Solutions: Profiles in Science for Young People, describes the impact of Thomas Edison on American technology. Ages 8-12. 144 pp. $4.95 plus $1.50 p&h. Barron's, 250 Wireless Blvd., Hauppauge, NY 11788.

AGRICULTURE

Our American Land: 1987 Yearbook of Agriculture. U.S. Department of Agriculture. Topically surveys U.S. agriculture from colonial times to the

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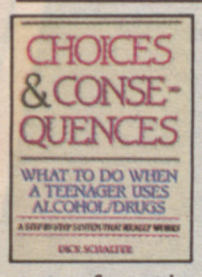
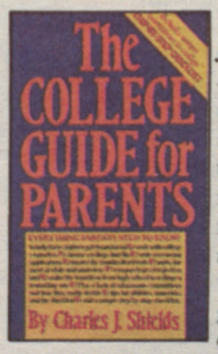
present. 323 pp. $9.50. GPO No. 001-000-04494-0. Prepay by check to Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402, or charge to VISA/MC/Choice at 1/202/783-3238.

DRUG ABUSE



Choices and Consequences: What To Do When a Teenager Uses Alcohol/Drugs. Dick Schaefer. An experienced addiction counselor offers parents and other adults a step-by-step system for getting teenagers to *want* and *choose* to get off—and stay off—alcohol/drugs. 155 pp. $9.95 plus $1.50 p&h. By credit card charge at 1/800/231-5165 (in Minnesota, 1/800/247-0484) or by mail from Johnson Institute, 7151 Metro Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55435.

COUNSELING



The College Guide for Parents. Charles J. Shields. A high school counselor advises parents on the college admissions process, including such topics as financial aid, "right" reasons for going to college, college recruitment strategies, and athletic scholarships. 197 pp. $9.95 plus $2 p&h. Surrey Books, 500 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611.

Profiles in Achievement. Charles M. Holloway. Presents biographies of eight outstanding American men and women (the best known are Arthur Ashe and San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros) who made education their springboard to success. 173 pp. Paperback ed., $9.95. College Board Publications, Dept. M14, Box 886, New York, NY 10101-0886.

SOCIAL STUDIES

K-6 Geography: Themes, Key Ideas, and Learning Opportunities. Geographic Education National Implementation Project (GENIP), a project of four professional geographic organizations. Presents ideas for K-6 lesson plans, curriculum guidelines, teaching and learning resources, and support materials. 47 pp. $6 prepaid to NCGE. Bulk prices available upon request. National Council for Geographic Education, Western Illinois University, Macomb, IL 61455.

Take the Barriers Down. The Montana Logging and Ballet Company. Four usually zany (but not on this album!) folksingers—who've performed for NEA audiences—here perform 10 of their own compositions, led off by the anti-apartheid title song they composed and performed for South African Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu. LP record or audio cassette, $8.50 plus $2 p&h. $1 from each album or cassette goes to the Archbishop's Metropolitan Fund for jailed South African children. Upstream Records, Box 952, Helena, MT 59624 (1/406/443-1690).

SAFETY

The Look Out Book! A Child's Guide to Street Safety. Cindy Blakely and Suzanne Drinkwater. Shows in pictures and text (for young readers) rules for playing it smart when playing outdoors. 29 pp. $5.95. Scholastic, Inc., 730 Broadway, New York, NY 10003.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Samagram. A magazine for middle school children, published by the Samantha Smith Foundation to help foster international understanding. Annual subscription (four issues per school year), $10 prepaid. Samantha Smith Foundation, 9 Union St., Hallowell, ME 04347.

RURAL EDUCATION

Country Teacher. A 16-page journal of ideas and resources for rural teachers. Annual subscription (three issues per school year), $5 prepaid. Or send self-addressed stamped envelope (39¢) for one sample copy. Country Teacher, P.O. Box 609, Miranda, CA 95553.

PHOTOGRAPHY

No Easy Roses: A Look at the Lives of City Teenagers. Olive Pierce. Black and white photos and student "testimonies" depict the inner life of students at an urban high school. 94 pp. Special price to NEA members, $10 plus $2 p&h. Olive Pierce, 165 Upland Rd., Cambridge, MA 02140.

The "Free or Inexpensive" feature is included in *NEA Today* as a service to readers. Items listed are selected by the editors at their discretion from review copies submitted by publishers. Since this column is editorial matter rather than advertising, there is no charge for listings.

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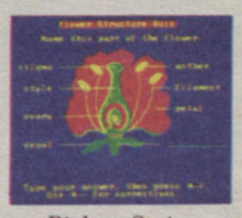
Biology Series

Physics Series

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TELEVISION

From Our Miss Brooks

So much human drama goes on in schools that since TV's earliest days producers have been drawn to create shows with classroom settings. The results have been entertaining, all right—but how have they shaped America's perceptions of public schools and the people who work there?

Television has been entertaining us with western saloons, squad cars, courtrooms, hospitals, and *classrooms* for almost 40 years now. There've been at least a dozen series set in the public schools—situation comedies and serious dramas alike.

But many school employees want to know why no one has done for them what Emmy-winning producer Steven Bochco (*Hill Street Blues, L.A. Law*) has done for police officers and lawyers.

Few TV shows about schools have come close to "believability." The pattern was set back in the 1950s, when Miss Brooks (Eve Arden) and Mr. Peepers (Wally Cox)—products of the Lucille Ball/Milton Berle era—debuted with teacher portraits that were long on burlesque and short on reality.

While Miss Brooks was at least presentable in a prissy way, her penchant for the smart-mouthed rejoinder made her seem oblivious to professional concerns. With his munchkin-like voice and dopey facial expressions, Peepers made male teachers look wimpy.

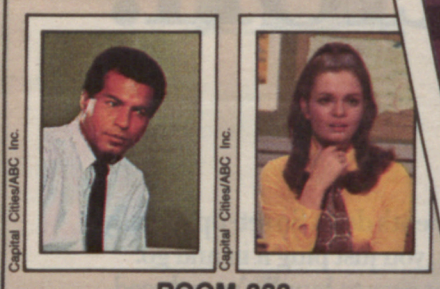
NEA leaders objected to these farcical stereotypes—and those objections bore fruit in the early 1960s when a young Hollywood producer named E. Jack Neuman began extensive research for a 60-minute weekly dramatic series that was to become *Mr. Novak.*

Neuman invited NEA to provide him with a script review panel to test the reality of his story lines. The Association put together a panel of 91 members from 54 southern California schools, which reviewed 36 scripts during 1963. The collaboration lasted throughout *Mr. Novak*'s two-year run.

Mr. Novak and a bouffant-haired young woman are silhouetted in front of a lit fireplace. The woman looks up dreamily at the young teacher and says with playful intimacy, "What made you want to become a teacher?" Our hero gets a faraway look in his eyes and recalls a battlefield in Korea. "I looked at the bullethole in my friend's forehead. It made me realize just how precious life was. I knew right then that for me information, wisdom, knowledge, not bullets, were the answers to the problems in the world."

It didn't hurt that Mr. Novak was played by heartthrob James Franciscus. With his golden hair and contemplative airs, he was the first TV teacher to give glamour and heroism to the profession.

MR. NOVAK



ROOM 222

WHITE SHADOW

In episode after episode, Mr. Novak and other sensitively portrayed school employees took on cutting-edge themes of the day: teacher salaries, student cheating, grade inflation, civil rights, even death.

The scripts reflected authentic classroom issues because the research was exhaustive. Producer Neuman made it a point to substitute-teach at 52 high schools around the country before setting pen to paper on *Mr. Novak.*

Despite good ratings and some 30 awards, including the coveted Peabody, *Mr. Novak* was cancelled in 1965.

Over the next 10 years, *Lucas Tanner, Room 222,* and *The White Shadow* attempted to portray some of the same range of professional issues. *Room 222*'s Lloyd Haynes overcame existing racial stereotypes in his portrayal of one of TV's first Black male professionals—the sensitive, tweed-coated Pete Dixon. And *The White Shadow* won a 1980 award from the NEA Committee on Human Relations for "outstanding use of television to portray interethnic relations."

FAME

It's teacher review day for Gabe Kotter. The "Sweathogs" are seated in a circle "rapping."

Vice-Principal Woodman: You're not using the textbook.

Mr. Kotter: We Sweathogs are forgotten people. We don't get good books. Look at this social studies book; it's outdated. It says, "Texas is the largest of our 39 states." TV is "predicted." You wonder why my methods have to be a little unorthodox?

Mr. Woodman: I used to teach social studies. Social studies is memorizing names, dates, places.

Mr. Kotter: That's reciting, not learning. Learning is a discussion between people; a dialogue. The Greeks did it.

HEAD OF THE CLASS

Mr. Woodman: Where are your Greeks today? In a restaurant on Ninth Avenue.

The conflict between the against-all-odds capable teacher and the buffoonish principal has been good for TV laughs ever since Miss Brooks first outsmarted the bullying Mr. Conklyn. Viewers of the late 1970s sitcom *Welcome Back, Kotter* had no choice but to view Kotter's brash, good-humored rapport with his academic losers at Buchanan High in Brooklyn as a talent infinitely more valuable than the kind of dry orthodoxy espoused by Vice-Principal Woodman—whose ethnic slurs and sheer contempt for Kotter's "Sweathogs" made a profound statement about who in the system really cares about kids.

TELEVISION

Bronx Zoo

Capital Cities/ABC Inc.

Next came *Fame*. From its pumping, pop-hit musical score to its no-nonsense voice-over ("Fame *costs*...And right here is where you start paying *in sweat*"), this series about a New York City magnet school for the performing arts pulled few punches.

In *The Bronx Zoo*, which debuted last year and is scheduled to run again this year as a mid-season replacement, iconoclastic principal Joe Danzig (Ed Asner) is allowed to develop into a central character of depth and complexity, but the union representative and various faculty members come off as small-minded and inconsequential.

Another new show, *Degrassi Jr. High*, produced in Canada and endorsed by NEA, shifts the milieu from high school to junior high, following a group of metropolitan seventh and eighth graders.

And in a reverse of the Sweathogs, the currently airing *Head of the Class* spotlights academia's best and brightest, focusing—as did *Welcome Back, Kotter*—primarily on one class and one teacher (Howard Hesseman), so the viewer is treated to the sight of a competent teacher who's a major figure in the cast.

Can glamorous people who put on makeup and read scripts to look and sound like school employees ever be believable? Should we even expect them to be? TV's province, after all, is entertainment and escapism. Literally depicting the daily reality of school life (or police work, or hospitals) wouldn't make for very enjoyable viewing—and ratings are the name of the game.

Still, the TV characters representing teachers "have resembled caricatures, some more benign than others," says Rick Wallace, a speech and drama teacher at Corvallis (Oregon) High School. "I'm disturbed by the lack of realism."

Adds Flo Williams, a speech and drama teacher at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, Va.: "The real live stories coming out of my classroom would make *Welcome Back, Kotter* look like Mary Poppins. TV's portrayals of teachers and administrators lack depth and accuracy."

E. Jack Neuman, who encountered his share of suspicion from educators when he started researching the *Mr. Novak* series, commiserates with teachers who—like all professionals—cringe when they see their occupational type inaccurately portrayed in the media. Neuman blames lazy colleagues—the TV writers and producers who've failed to visit dozens of high schools as he did, or to work with NEA, making the professional contacts to ensure accuracy.

"It's up to the integrity of the writer and the producer to research a story to ensure its authenticity down to the tiniest detail," says Neuman. "The network couldn't care less as long as they're getting the ratings. When it comes down to it, Hollywood has no responsibility to represent a profession accurately."

It's the "tiny details" that bug many NEA members the most. For instance, why has a largely female profession been portrayed mainly by male actors? Why have almost all TV's teacher characters been single? Why have school support workers—secretaries, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, custodians—remained so invisible? Why are unions always portrayed negatively?

Attention to such details is one standard for the professionalism of a show—the equivalent of the writers' having done their homework. But perhaps the most to hope for from the television industry is what Neuman referred to when he launched *Mr. Novak* more than 20 years ago:

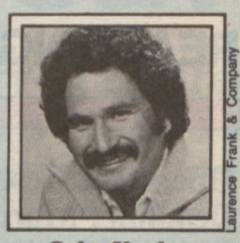
"I do know I have respect for education and educators. I know that they have a complex of problems, and I know that the first step toward the solution of any problem is to confront it and give it a voice. I can't think of any better place for that sort of ethical shootout than on our television screens."

—Vicky Lytle

WELCOME BACK, KOTTER

Capital Cities/ABC Inc.

Sweathog Nostalgia: Kotter's Class Act



Laurence Frank & Company

Gabe Kaplan

The man who invented the "Sweathogs," that disarming band of academic misfits on *Welcome Back, Kotter*, remembers today what it was like to be near the bottom of the intellectual heap himself, as a student at Erasmus Hall High in Brooklyn.

"With the Kotter show I wanted to take issue with those school systems that treat remedial students as if they're not important," explains Gabe Kaplan, a.k.a. Mr. Kotter. "I know in my high school, back in the early 1960s, we were made to feel you couldn't amount to anything because you weren't at the top of the class. I wanted to show what happens when a teacher comes along with a little compassion and caring and works with these students.

"I can think of one teacher who took a kind of special interest in me," Kaplan adds. "She seemed to think I was an underachiever and deserved more attention. I had teachers like her in mind when I created the Kotter character."

Kaplan, who conceived the series and wrote several episodes a year, has no illusions about TV's ability to depict reality in the sitcom format. *Welcome Back, Kotter* featured a class of 12 or so students, with four of them dominating the action.

"When we needed a change of scene," Kaplan recalls, "we showed the Sweathogs coming to my house. It was show biz—and except for our interest in trying to portray some relevant social issues, it bore little relation to reality."

Nonetheless, Kaplan muses, he received thousands of letters from teachers around the country who felt inspired by his fun-loving portrayal. Teachers would tell him the show had motivated them to crack a few jokes or not to be so authoritarian with their students.

In the years since *Welcome Back, Kotter* ceased production (the series is still in syndication), the 41-year-old Kaplan has made several films. He continues to perform as a comic in concerts, nightclubs, and hotels.

—V.L.

Your NEA

REACHING OUT

Operation Rescue Deadline: March 15

The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education, NEA's nonprofit, tax-exempt foundation, will accept proposals for 1988-89 Operation Rescue projects until March 15. Operation Rescue has already funded 21 local Association dropout prevention projects, to the tune of almost $574,000, in its first two years of operation.

A total of $100,000 will be available for 1988-89 grants, so only a limited number will be awarded, and competition will be severe.

For more information contact NFIE, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036 (1/202/822-7840).

NEH Seeks K-12 Teacher-Scholars

The National Endowment for the Humanities has launched a new grants program to fund full-time independent study in any of the humanities by one K-12 teacher per state during the 1989-90 academic year.

Because these one-year grants are intended to replace recipients' salaries or to supplement sabbatical pay, none will exceed $27,000 plus $500 for books for the winner's school and $500 for a mentor honorarium. Teachers may seek additional funding from their schools or school districts.

Application deadline is May 1. For further information contact the Teacher-Scholar Program in the Division of Education Programs, NEH, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Rm. 302, Washington, DC 20506 (1/202/786-0377).

April ESP Meeting Set for Orlando

NEA's annual conference for educational support personnel will take place April 15-17 at the Sheraton World Hotel in Orlando, Fla. Theme of this third national ESP conference is "Working Together for Better Schools." Among the scheduled workshops are sessions on health and safety, minority involvement, and subcontracting.

Registration forms are available by calling 1/202/822-7139. Forms and registration fees ($25 per person) must be returned by March 15 to ESP Program, NEA Affiliate Services, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington DC 20036.

Do Your Students Have a Favorite Caldecott Book?

Any organized group of children—preschool through eighth grade—with adult leadership is eligible to win up to $100 worth of critically acclaimed children's books in a competition sponsored by the Association for Library Service to Children. To enter, a group must prepare an original banner focusing on a book that's either won the Caldecott Medal or been a Caldecott Honor Book any time in the last 50 years.

Other prizes include $50 worth of Caldecott books and filmstrips on Randolph Caldecott, the 19th century British illustrator for whom the Medal is named.

Entry deadline is April 1. For an official entry form and more information, send a self-addressed, stamped (22¢) envelope to Banner Contest Coordinator Elizabeth Huntoon, Director of Children's Services, Chicago Public Library, 425 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611.

Diabetes Study Needs Volunteers

Medical researchers at 27 clinical centers across the U.S. and Canada need 13- to 39-year-olds who've had insulin-dependent diabetes for less than five years, for a long-term study sponsored by the National Institutes of Health.

The goal is to compare the effectiveness of traditional and intensive insulin treatment in preventing diabetic complications such as blindness and heart, kidney, and nerve disease. Volunteers accepted will receive up to six years of free, expert diabetes care, including free insulin and highly sophisticated tests to spot complications early.

For more information and prescreening, call 1/800/522-DCCT. □

MAKING NEWS

NEA Vice-President Keith Geiger delivered the keynote address last month at a national conference on "The Future of **Academic Freedom**: Context and Challenge," cosponsored by NEA, FTP-NEA, and the United Faculty of Florida. Geiger's address cited the serious threats to academic freedom that have surfaced in the 1980s, including pressure groups such as Accuracy in Academia and the excessive use of part-time and temporary faculty appointments. Also speaking was Jim Davenport, chair of NEA's Standing Committee on Higher Education. Citing Albert Einstein's definition of academic freedom as the "right to search for the truth and to publish and teach what one holds true," Davenport explained the many strategies NEA employs to combat threats to intellectual freedom—strategies ranging from lobbying to the filing of grievances and litigation...

NEA's Communications and Human and Civil Rights units have teamed up to produce a 60-minute TV documentary for **Black History Month**, focusing on women involved in the 1960s civil rights movement in the South. Atlanta's Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Nonviolent Social Change has lent some of its facilities to the project. As we go to press, the production is tentatively set to air over the Learning Channel during the week of Feb. 14-21...

NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell and other leaders of the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession gathered recently in London for an update on education developments in **South Africa** for Black and other minority children. The leaders found that South African teachers of minorities are expressing enthusiasm in the face of many challenges. Meeting participants from Europe and North America renewed their commitment to support programs of the African Teachers Association of South Africa...

President Futrell was a panelist at a recent National Forum on **Youth at Risk.** Sponsored by the Education Commission of the States, the Washington, D.C., forum was a first step in bringing together leaders of government, business and industry, and national organizations in a nationwide effort to reduce the number of young people at risk of not making the transition from school to productive lives...

The **National Board** for Professional Teaching Standards is now in place and getting down to the business of determining how it will function. So far there are only two certainties: all teachers—present and future—will be eligible for Board certification, and the decision to go before the Board will be strictly up to the individual teacher. □

LOOKING BACK

Bob Riha, Jr.

► New legislation introduced in Congress this winter calls for the federal government to spend $2.5 billion to expand and improve day care for children from low- and moderate-income families ("Here Come the Four-Year-Olds," Dec. 1987). The bill—called H.R. 3660 in the House and S.1885 in the Senate—has 140 cosponsors and is endorsed by NEA and over 90 other national organizations making up the Alliance for Better Child Care. It would authorize the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to provide states with federal funds to help working families pay child care costs.

Legislators hope to hold hearings in both houses of Congress in early 1988 and move the bill to floor debate by spring.

Joe Di Dio

► Howard Spanogle has done it again. In 1984 his 40 journalism students at Glenbard East High School in Lombard, Ill., produced a hard-cover book, *Teenagers Themselves* ("People," Nov. 1985). Now there's a second volume, written by Spanogle's 1985-87 students and called *Voices of Conflict: Teenagers Themselves*. The new book features "views from both teens and adults on such timely topics as race, gangs, gay people, and physical handicaps," Association member Spanogle reports. It's available for $16.95 at bookstores or on order from Franklin Watts (1/800/843-3749).

► Vincent Chalk, a teacher of hearing-impaired students, has returned to his Irvine, Calif., classroom for three days a week, amid great celebration. The Orange County school district had reassigned him to a desk job last August because he was diagnosed as having AIDS. Chalk filed suit, claiming illegal discrimination under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("You and the Law," Nov. 1987). A trial court upheld the reassignment, but Chalk appealed and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth District ruled in his favor, reinstating him to his teaching job in November. The California Teachers Association and the Los Angeles school district both filed friend-of-the-court briefs on Chalk's behalf.

► Association member Liane Brandon ("People," May 1985), associate professor of education at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, is still making award-winning films. Her latest—"How To Prevent a Nuclear War"—is a funny, inspiring 30-minute film about ordinary citizens, peace, and grassroots democracy, featuring musical satirist Tom Lehrer and the Vernon Jones Gospel Singers and being distributed nationally by New Day Films of Wayne, N.J. A film of this type ordinarily has a production budget far beyond the $125,000 it took to produce "How To Prevent a Nuclear War," Brandon reports. But the film was a labor of love that drew New England filmmakers to donate their services—and businesses, foundations, and individuals to help defray expenses. □

Fred Mirfanai

NEA FINANCIAL REPORT

'A Very Good Year Indeed!'

A report to Association members from Roxanne Bradshaw, NEA Secretary-Treasurer

Thanks to another very strong year in terms of membership growth, NEA's financial condition remains solid.

The past five years have been a time of unprecedented expansion in the number of NEA members. Classroom teachers and school support personnel...early childhood educators and university professors...retired school employees and student members have all come forth in notable numbers to become members of the National Education Association.

Between Sept. 1, 1986, and August 31, 1987, NEA membership grew by over 52,000, to a total of 1,857,054. We're now clearly the nation's largest union—and also the number one advocacy organization.

Due to the increase in membership, our organization's revenues in the fiscal year ending August 31, 1987, exceeded our budget projections. The resulting increase in the Association's cash reserves ensures that our stable financial environment will continue.

But as your secretary-treasurer, I don't want to lose sight of the fact that just 10 years ago, in 1978, the NEA found it necessary to borrow nearly $10 million just to meet expenses. It's been only five years since we were required to use our line of credit for $3 million in order to make ends meet.

It's taken vigilant efforts on the part of our state affiliates and the NEA leadership to achieve the measure of financial security reflected on the next two pages. There you'll find a complete report of NEA's financial statements for the fiscal year ending last August 31, as audited by our certified public accounting firm.

The accounting teachers among you will have no trouble following the numbers, but I know I always appreciate a few interpretive comments.

The report on pages 22-23 is divided into three parts. First comes a letter from the auditing firm, Coopers & Lybrand, simply stating that their audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and that the financial statements are presented fairly and in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

Next come the actual financial statements on which the audit is based. The report concludes with 10 footnotes to these balance sheets and statements of activity, which help explain some of the individual items.

Let's begin with the balance sheets printed in the yellow box on page 22.

You'll note under *Assets* that NEA's total assets as of last August 31 amounted to $38,788,355. These assets consisted primarily of membership dues receivable from various state affiliates ($16,226,300); cash and short-term investments ($14,942,029); equipment, principally computers ($1,848,772); and funds expended as of that date for renovation of our headquarters building—principally architect fees ($2,338,298). The architect fees will ultimately be transferred to the capital improvement fund.

As of last August 31, the Association had no outstanding note payable to the bank. And I'm pleased to say that as we go to press we have not yet had to borrow under our line of credit this year.

In the next-to-last line in this statement, you'll see that the total fund balance in our general fund (that is, cumulative income over expenses) as of August 31, 1987, was $23,641,990—up $2,408,319 from a year before.

Turning to the general fund statements of activity, in the pink box on page 22, you'll note in the column headed *1987 Actual* that our total income was $110,595,465—an increase of $2,086,365 over our projected budget. Overall, this statement shows that each area's expenses were very close to the amount budgeted.

The pie chart on this page illustrates the various NEA areas in proportion, showing both total dollars and the percentage of the dues dollar that each accounts for. If you're not familiar with some of these areas, here's a brief explanation of each.

► AFFILIATE SERVICES plans, implements, and integrates NEA programs and services to affiliates. Nearly $28 million of its expenditures goes directly to affiliates to implement projects and to maintain the more than 1,200 UniServ professionals who provide the on-site assistance members need.

► LEGAL SERVICES funds employment-related legal cases for members and locals. Legal Services also protects each NEA member with $1 million in professional liability insurance.

► GOVERNANCE supports the Association's democratic decision-making process by funding the efficient operation of the Representative Assembly and other governance bodies.

► RESEARCH provides analyses that help chart the Association's course toward educational excellence. Research also offers NEA affiliates, media, other organizations, and lawmakers in-depth data and reports.

► DATA PROCESSING provides the technical support to accurately maintain the Association's membership records, research operations, office automation, and financial data through sophisticated computers based in Washington, D.C.

► HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS guides a wide variety of informational, training, and awards programs designed to help guarantee every child and school employee equal access and opportunity in education and employment.

► GOVERNMENT RELATIONS is responsible for keeping the Association the nation's most visible and effective advocate for education before Congress, federal agencies, and organizations that represent state lawmakers and officials. The Political Affairs component of Government Relations coordinates the Association's activities to support and elect friends of public education to public office.

► INSTRUCTION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT provides programs and services dedicated to the goal of helping all school employees reach their full professional potential.

► BUSINESS AND FINANCE makes sure the hard-earned dues dollars of NEA members are handled in an efficient, effective, and businesslike fashion—and maintains timely and accurate record of all 1,857,000-plus NEA members.

► ADMINISTRATION provides overall supervision and execution of all Association programs. Administration also provides staff support for NEA officers and governance bodies, maintains Association property, and coordinates employee relations.

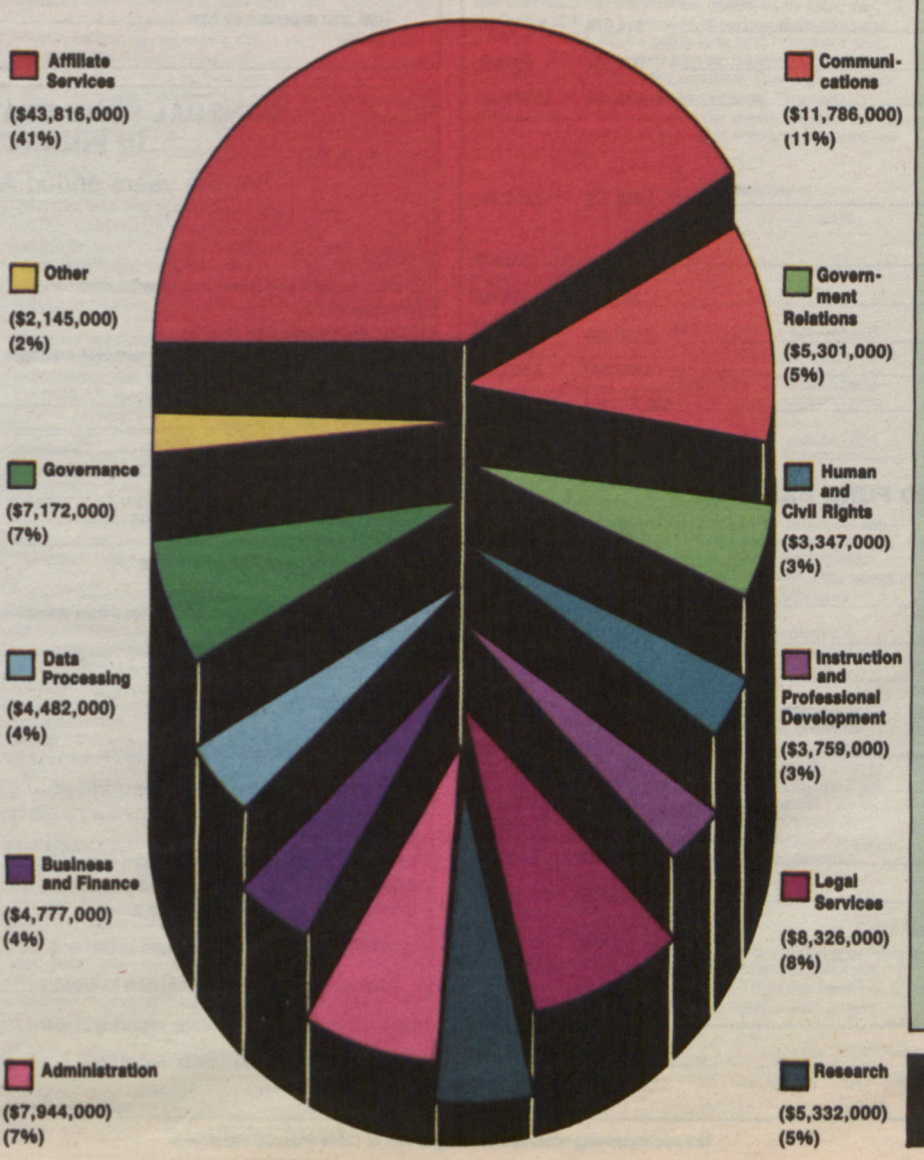
► COMMUNICATIONS keeps members up to date on education through *NEA Today* and other publications—and presents the Association's message to the public through television, media contacts, and a national advertising campaign.

Meanwhile, back in the pink box on page 22, you may notice that Affiliate Services spent more than it had budgeted. This excess expenditure was mostly due to the annual appropriation to the UniServ fund, which is required by our bylaws. The overage is directly related to the greater than anticipated increase in NEA membership.

After deducting area expenses ($106,041,708) and payments to the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education ($2,145,438) for the NFIE endowment fund and operating expenses, our excess of revenues over expenses was $2,408,319, which is the amount added to the fund balance. A very good year indeed! □

Your Dues Dollars at Work

National Education Association



Joe Di Dio

Roxanne Bradshaw, who taught psychology at Pikes Peak Community College in Colorado Springs for 13 years, was elected NEA secretary-treasurer in 1983.

SEE PAGES 22-23 FOR MORE DETAILS

NEA FINANCIAL REPORT

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
Audited Financial Statements

Coopers & Lybrand
Certified Public Accountants

To the Executive Committee and Members of the National Education Association of the United States

We have examined the balance sheets of the General Fund and the Capital Improvement Fund of the National Education Association of the United States (a nonprofit corporation incorporated by Act of the United States Congress) as of August 31, 1987 and 1986, and the related statements of activity and changes in financial position of the General Fund for the years then ended. We have also examined the consolidated balance sheets of the Special Purpose Funds of the National Education Association of the United States and subsidiary as of August 31, 1987 and 1986, and the related consolidated statements of activity and changes in fund balances for the years then ended. Our examinations were made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and, accordingly, included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly the financial position of the General Fund, Capital Improvement Fund and the Special Purpose Funds of the National Education Association of the United States and subsidiary as of August 31, 1987 and 1986, the results of operations and the changes in financial position of the General Fund, and the consolidated results of operations of the Special Purpose Funds for the years then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a consistent basis.

1800 M Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
November 4, 1987

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
GENERAL FUND BALANCE SHEETS

August 31, 1987 and 1986
(Note 2)

ASSETS

	1987	1986
Current Assets:		
Cash and short-term investments at cost, which approximates market	$14,942,029	$13,461,671
Membership dues receivable from state associations, net of reserves for cancellations and uncollectible amounts of $1,202,077 in 1987 and $1,219,901 in 1986 (Note 2)	16,226,300	14,919,964
Amounts due from affiliates and other organizations, net of reserve for bad debts of $92,723 in 1987 and 1986 (Notes 2 and 3)	1,259,588	600,383
Publication and advertising receivables	167,708	295,906
Prepaid expenses	814,079	1,542,109
Other current assets	921,304	605,601
Total current assets	34,331,008	31,425,634
Long-Term Assets:		
Equipment, at cost, less accumulated depreciation of $7,495,837 in 1987 and $5,744,331 in 1986 (Note 2)	1,848,772	2,915,482
Property under capital leases, net of accumulated depreciation of $677,490 in 1986 (Note 2)	—	164,612
Other long-term assets	260,277	67,758
Deferred building renovation costs (Notes 2 and 9)	2,338,298	361,289
Total long-term assets	4,447,347	3,509,141
Total general fund assets	$38,778,355	$34,934,775

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE

	1987	1986
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	$ 7,139,686	$ 6,464,496
Accrued fringe benefits	2,770,595	2,443,467
Amount due to Special Purpose Funds (Note 2)	2,570,289	1,947,392
Amounts held for affiliates and other organizations (Note 3)	346,297	528,620
Obligation under capital leases (Note 2)	—	217,347
Total current liabilities	12,826,867	11,601,322
Long-Term Liabilities:		
Accrued severance pay (Note 2)	2,309,498	2,099,782
Total long-term liabilities	2,309,498	2,099,782
Total general fund liabilities	15,136,365	13,701,104
Commitments and Contingencies (Notes 9 and 10)		
Fund Balance	23,641,990	21,233,671
Total general fund liabilities and fund balance	$38,778,355	$34,934,775

GENERAL FUND STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITY
for the years ended August 31, 1987 and 1986
(Note 2)

	1987 Budget	1987 Actual	1986 Actual
Revenues:			
Membership dues (Note 2)	$107,759,100	$109,668,647	$100,076,951
Interest and investment income	500,000	732,702	841,763
Fees and services, principally from affiliates and other organizations	250,000	194,116	217,499
Total revenues	108,509,100	110,595,465	101,136,213
Expenses by area:			
Affiliate Services (Note 2)	43,227,812	43,815,529	39,182,585
Communications	11,746,495	11,786,044	12,116,791
Government Relations	5,547,422	5,300,868	4,980,916
Human and Civil Rights	3,460,935	3,347,158	2,775,668
Instruction and Professional Development	3,905,478	3,758,883	3,049,542
Legal Services	8,423,152	8,325,977	8,323,592
Research	5,358,530	5,331,895	5,065,377
Administration	7,723,891	7,943,711	7,724,094
Business and Finance	4,772,436	4,776,961	4,698,633
Data Processing	5,210,543	4,482,456	4,390,128
Governance	6,796,815	7,172,226	5,462,284
Total expenses by area	106,173,509	106,041,708	97,769,610
Other expenses:			
NFIE (Note 8)	2,145,438	2,145,438	350,000
Incentive retirement expense (Note 5)	—	—	648,337
Excess of revenues over expenses	$ 190,153	2,408,319	2,368,266
Fund balance, beginning of year		21,233,671	18,865,405
Fund balance, end of year		$ 23,641,990	$ 21,233,671

SCHEDULES OF AREA EXPENSES BY TYPE
for the years ended August 31, 1987 and 1986

	1987	1986
Salaries and benefits (Note 5)	$ 32,511,634	$30,911,305
Grants to, and joint projects with, state and local associations	31,837,615	26,995,363
Kate Frank/DuShane Program expenditures (Note 4)	5,884,999	5,938,207
Travel	10,023,519	9,258,843
Publications costs, net of advertising income	4,190,087	3,887,149
Outside services (including consultants, legal and audit)	11,062,638	10,471,864
Machinery rentals, repairs, materials and supplies	4,525,925	4,773,218
Office expenses (including telephone, office supplies and utilities)	2,886,691	2,951,749
Administrative expenses (including interest, insurance and rent)	3,118,600	2,581,912
Total area expenses by type	$106,041,708	$97,769,610

GENERAL FUND STATEMENTS OF CHANGES IN FINANCIAL POSITION
for the years ended August 31, 1987 and 1986

	1987	1986
Sources of cash and short-term investments:		
From operations:		
Excess of revenues over expenses	$ 2,408,319	$ 2,368,266
Increase (decrease) in excess of revenues over expenses from noncash revenues and expenses:		
Depreciation and amortization	1,943,539	2,389,948
Membership dues receivable	(1,306,336)	(1,213,910)
Publication and advertising receivables	128,198	197,211
Prepaid expenses	728,030	918,077
Accrued severance pay	209,716	(96,944)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	675,190	45,459
Accrued fringe benefits	327,128	15,824
Amount due to Special Purpose Funds	622,897	367,796
Cash and short-term investments provided from operations	5,736,681	4,991,727
Amounts held for affiliates and other organizations	—	172,370
Total sources	5,736,681	5,164,097
Uses of cash and short-term investments:		
Advances to affiliates and other organizations, net	659,205	61,978
Purchase of equipment	712,217	2,332,700
Increase in other assets	508,222	150,366
Increase in deferred building renovations costs	1,977,009	136,289
Amounts held for affiliates and other organizations	182,323	—
Decrease in obligations under capital leases	217,347	495,972
Total uses of cash and short-term investments	4,256,323	3,177,305
Net increase in cash and short-term investments	1,480,358	1,986,792
Cash and short-term investments, beginning of year	13,461,671	11,474,879
Cash and short-term investments, end of year	$14,942,029	$13,461,671

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

NEA FINANCIAL REPORT

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND BALANCE SHEETS

August 31, 1987 and 1986
(Note 2)

ASSETS

	1987	1986
Cash	$ 1,133	$ 1,073
Land at cost	1,753,777	1,753,777
Building, at cost, less accumulated depreciation of $6,288,894 in 1987 and $6,049,902 in 1986 (Note 2)	5,608,903	5,847,895
Total capital improvement fund assets	$7,363,813	$7,602,745

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE

Liabilities	$ —	$ —
Fund balance (Note 2)	7,363,813	7,602,745
Total capital improvement fund liabilities and fund balance	$7,363,813	$7,602,745

SPECIAL PURPOSE FUNDS CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEETS

August 31, 1987 and 1986
(Note 2)

ASSETS

	1987	1986
Cash	$ 338,270	$ 68,350
Accounts receivable	1,441,463	1,960,627
Prepaid expenses	12,713	153,688
Leasehold improvements, furniture and equipment, at cost, net of accumulated depreciation of $358,569 in 1987 and $235,312 in 1986	293,843	157,541
Amount due from general fund	2,570,289	1,947,392
Total special purpose funds assets	$4,656,578	$4,287,598

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE

Liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	$ 768,409	$ 451,283
Deferred NEA-Retired Program (Note 2)	1,317,750	1,062,975
Total special purpose funds liabilities	2,086,159	1,514,258
Fund balances	2,570,419	2,773,340
Total special purpose funds liabilities and fund balances	$4,656,578	$4,287,598

SPECIAL PURPOSE FUNDS CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITY AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES

for the years ended August 31, 1987 and 1986
(Note 2)

	Fund balances, August 31, 1985	Revenues: NEA appropriation	Revenues: Other	Expenses	Fund balances, August 31, 1986	Revenues: NEA appropriation	Revenues: Other	Expenses	Fund balances, August 31, 1987
Uniserv Fund (Note 2)	$ 261,886	$20,207,239	$ —	$19,513,034	$ 956,091	$22,312,024	$ —	$23,026,372	$ 241,743
Special Services and Education Travel Trust Funds	386,624	—	10,349,980	10,411,416	325,188	—	11,886,237	11,581,872	629,553
National Education Employees Assistance Fund (Note 7)	223,504	—	16,257	130,212	109,549	—	8,605	57,459	60,695
Reserve for Retirement Benefits Fund (Note 5)	148,212	648,337	—	21,160	775,389	—	48,947	73,687	750,649
NEA-Retired Program Fund (Note 2)	430,001	301,543	255,234	379,655	607,123	355,397	297,831	372,572	887,779
	$1,450,227	$21,157,119	$10,621,471	$30,455,477	$2,773,340	$22,667,421	$12,241,620	$35,111,962	$2,570,419

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. ORGANIZATION

The National Education Association of the United States (NEA) is a nonprofit corporation incorporated under a special Act of the United States Congress. The purpose of NEA is to elevate the character and advance the interests of the profession of teaching and to promote the cause of education in the United States.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of presentation
The financial statements of NEA have been prepared on the accrual basis. To ensure observance with its bylaws, the resources of NEA are classified for accounting and reporting purposes into funds established according to their nature and purpose. The assets, liabilities, fund balances and changes in fund balances are reported in the following fund groups:

General Fund—The bylaws of NEA provide that the General Fund shall comprise all income received in the form of dues, interest, dividends, fees, earnings from advertising, sales of NEA publications and payments for services and funds received by gift, bequest, devise or transfer to NEA, which are not specifically designated for deposit in the Capital Improvement Fund. All operating accounts and debt services shall be paid out of the General Fund.

Capital Improvement Fund—The bylaws of NEA provide that the Capital Improvement Fund shall comprise the properties and permanent investment of NEA and other funds, or properties received by gift, devise, bequest or transfer for deposit in the Fund. Disbursement from the Capital Improvement Fund to acquire new properties or to provide for major long-term improvements in existing properties must be authorized by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors. Expenditures from this Fund for any other purpose must be authorized by a two-thirds vote of the Representative Assembly.

Special Purpose Funds—NEA has various Special Purpose Funds which consist of restricted funds or funds designated for specific projects and purposes. Special Purpose Funds include activities such as the UniServ Fund and the administration of various services such as insurance plans for members. These funds also include the activity of Member Benefits Corporation (MBC), a wholly-owned subsidiary of NEA. MBC provides support to the Special Services and Educational Travel Trust Funds primarily in the areas of membership services, affiliate support, marketing and training.

General Fund budget
The budget of NEA is designed to achieve the goals and objectives of NEA. The budget amounts included in the statements of General Fund activity are as approved by NEA's Representative Assembly and amended by the Board of Directors, as set forth in the guidelines approved by the Representative Assembly and the Board of Directors.

NEA-Retired Program
During 1982, NEA began offering life membership to retired members through a new special purpose fund known as the NEA-Retired Program. Payments to the fund qualify retired members for the regular services provided to active members, as well as services designed specifically for retired persons. Payments to the fund are recorded as deferred income when received and amortized over a 10-year period.

Property, equipment and depreciation
NEA records depreciation on its building in the Capital Improvement Fund. This depreciation is recorded using the straight-line method of the estimated useful life of the building of 50 years. Depreciation on the building was approximately $239,000 in 1987 and 1986, reflecting the change to the Capital Improvement Fund balance.

NEA capitalizes equipment with a cost in excess of $2,500 in the General Fund and depreciates these assets using the straight-line method over the estimated useful life of the assets. Leases which meet the criteria requiring capitalization, as specified in the Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 13, are capitalized by NEA. Depreciation on equipment was $1,778,927 in 1987 and $2,032,569 in 1986.

Deferred building renovation costs
Architectural, design and engineering services costs related to the proposed renovation of the building have been recorded as deferred costs in the General Fund. The accumulated costs will be transferred to the Capital Improvement Fund when construction is commenced.

Membership dues
Membership dues are recognized as income over the membership year, which is September 1 through August 31. Dues are assessed to members as provided in the Bylaws. An estimated provision for uncollectibles, write-offs and cancellations is charged against membership dues revenues.

In accordance with the Bylaws, a percentage of the membership dues is allocated to UniServ grants (which are included in the expenses of affiliate services), whereby NEA provides grants to affiliates to assist in funding their staff representatives whose responsibilities are to implement, improve and coordinate programs of NEA.

Accrued severance pay
NEA has a policy entitling employees with over 10 years of service to severance pay equal to 10 weeks of salary. NEA recognizes the liability for severance pay at the time the employee reaches 10 years of employment and is entitled to the severance pay.

Reclassification
Certain 1986 amounts have been reclassified to conform with the 1987 presentation.

3. GOVERNANCE AFFILIATES, NONGOVERNANCE AFFILIATES, AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

NEA provides various administrative services and acts as custodian for the funds of certain Governance and Nongovernance Affiliates and other organizations, which also offer services to members of NEA and to other educators. However, each of these organizations has a separate Board of Directors and operates independently of NEA. Accordingly, the accompanying financial statements present the financial activity of NEA exclusive of these organizations, except for the funds held by or due to NEA as custodian.

4. KATE FRANK/DUSHANE PROGRAM

The Kate Frank/DuShane Program (the Program) was established by the Representative Assembly to protect the human, civil and professional rights of educators. The major project of the Program, the Unified Legal Services Program, provides reimbursement for legal assistance to members of the teaching profession in matters related to their employment.

5. RETIREMENT PLAN

NEA participates in a multiemployer, contributory, defined-benefit retirement plan, which covers substantially all permanent employees. Approximately 70% of the employees covered under the plan are employed by NEA; the remaining 30% are employees of various state and local affiliates of NEA. NEA's policy is to fund retirement costs accrued. NEA's retirement plan contribution expenses for the fiscal years ended 1987 and 1986 were approximately $2,558,000 and $2,391,000, respectively. The accumulated plan benefits and plan net assets available for benefits as of the date of the latest acturarial valuation are presented below:

	January 1, 1987	January 1, 1986
Actuarial present value of accumulated benefits:		
Vested	$41,393,091	$35,348,565
Nonvested	5,652,860	4,859,129
	$47,045,951	$40,207,694
Net assets available for benefits	$98,326,999	$83,340,320

The actuarial present value of accumulated plan benefits ignores the effects of future compensation increases on the benefits that participants will receive for their past service. If this value is adjusted for projected salary increases, consistent with the assumed rate of return, the adjusted actuarial present value of accumulated plan benefits would be approximately $68,254,000 and $59,213,000 as of January 1, 1987 and 1986, respectively.

The assumed rate of return used in determining the actuarial present value of accumulated plan benefits was 8% for both 1987 and 1986. As of January 1, 1987, the retirement plan had no unfunded liabilities.

An incentive retirement option was made available to all NEA staff eligible for retirement to receive an additional three years of credited service for use in the calculation of retirement benefits if they chose to retire generally prior to August 31, 1986. The actuarial cost for providing the additional three years of credited service amounted to $648,337, which was included as an expense in the General Fund and transferred as an NEA appropriation to the Special Purpose Funds for the year ended August 31, 1986.

6. BANK LINE OF CREDIT

NEA has a line of credit of $4,000,000 from a commercial bank at the bank's prime interest rate. There has been no borrowing against the line during the years ended August 31, 1987 and 1986.

7. NATIONAL EDUCATION EMPLOYEES ASSISTANCE FUND, INC.

The National Education Employees Assistance Fund, Inc. (NEEAF), formerly the National Teachers Assistance Fund, Inc., is a nonprofit corporation established for the purpose of providing financial and other assistance to member organizations and their individual members involved in disputes over terms and conditions of employment. In this capacity, NEEAF has, from time to time, guaranteed loans made by lending institutions to teachers who were involved in such disputes. These loans are collateralized by letters of credit from those state affiliates which are members of NEEAF and also by NEA's letter of credit in the amount of $1,675,000 on which NEA pays a commitment fee. In the event of default on a loan, the bylaws of NEEAF provide that the bank shall first draw upon the letter of credit of the state affiliate from which the funds were transmitted and, thereafter, proportionately from all other letters of credit, including NEA's.

As of August 31, 1987, NEA is contingently liable for $286,146 of the $572,292 in loans guaranteed by NEEAF in the event of default.

8. NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATION

The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE) was created in 1969 by the National Education Association as a tax-exempt public foundation to improve the quality of education for citizens of the United States and other countries.

During the year ended August 31, 1987, payments totaling $2,145,438 were made to NFIE. Of this amount, $700,000 was earmarked for the "Operation Rescue" program, which provides grants to local teachers associations to take the lead in developing cooperative efforts resolving the dropout crisis, and $1,000,000 was allocated to begin an endowment that will help fund other programs to meet critical needs of students and teachers in years to come. The remaining funds were provided to cover administrative supporting services of the NFIE.

9. COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES

NEA has been named as a party in several legal matters, the outcome of which cannot presently be determined. Management believes that the net results of these claims will not have a material impact on NEA.

NEA has entered into a preconstruction contract and an architectural, design and engineering contract related to the proposed renovation of its office building. Outstanding commitments at August 31, 1987 relative to these contracts amount to $1,309,810.

Future minimum lease payments under operating leases as of August 31, 1987, are as follows:

1988	$ 409,321
1989	358,828
1990	299,210
1991	31,505
	$1,098,864

Rental expense for all operating leases was approximately $437,000 in 1987 and $423,000 in 1986.

10. INCOME TAXES

NEA is exempt from income taxation under the provisions of Section 501(c)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code. Organizations described in that section are taxable only on their unrelated business income. Since NEA has incurred a cumulative loss from these unrelated business activities, no provision for income taxes has been recorded in the accompanying financial statements.

John Lyons

People

Kathy Borchers

It started with Rhode Island science teacher **John Lyons'** curiosity about Mt. St. Helens, the Washington State volcano that erupted unexpectedly eight years ago, killing 60-plus people. Now, after three days and 30 miles of solitary hiking and camping last October, Lyons' strongest impression is of a "spectacular mountain that is rebuilding itself."

When he wasn't hiking along the ash-swept paths to within three miles of the hollowed dome, Lyons was scavenging outside the park, which reopened its gates to tourists last May. He brought back pumice, lava, blast wood, and slides to use in geology lessons for his Portsmouth middle school students and those in neighboring districts.

He tells the youngsters that if they visit Mt. St. Helens when they're 90 years old, they'll be able to see what visitors to the old Mt. St. Helens saw—"a mountain completely reborn." □

When Macon, Ga., school district officials closed half a dozen predominantly Black elementary schools in 1984, they demoted three of the four Black principals. One of those three was **Vivian Hatcher**, demoted to librarian.

Indignant, Hatcher fought back. With her minister and a supportive school board member, she went to the superintendent and asked for a school—but without success.

While working as a librarian, Hatcher took courses at her own expense. She completed the coursework for a doctorate in educational administration.

"Studying kept me going and kept me together," she says.

Hatcher applied for every principalship or comparable position that became vacant in Macon or Bibb County. Eighteen times she went before screening committees—without success.

With legal support from the Georgia Association of Educators and NEA, Hatcher sued the Macon school board and superintendent, charging denial of due process. The district court threw out her suit.

But Hatcher and her Association attorneys appealed to Georgia's 11th circuit court of appeals, and there Hatcher was vindicated. She secured a settlement requiring the school district to pay her back salary and legal expenses—and she's once again a principal in Macon, at the 436-student Burrell Elementary School.

"You know, when something like this happens, people don't need to stop," Hatcher says. "Don't wallow in your sorrow—keep busy, keep going, and in the end you'll come through." □

"Let's make a little history!" Those words direct the start of another videotape by students in **Roy Pullam's** Bonnet Film program at North Henderson (Ky.) Junior High. The teen volunteers in the civilization teacher's nonprofit project travel throughout the state videotaping and photographing their own interviews with local celebrities.

Pullam started the venture in 1982 to ensure a living history archive of area notables. The project was funded by local contributions until last year, when it received a state education incentive grant.

While the students handle the camera activities, Pullam arranges the interviews, compiles the questions, and reassures everyone. Among the 148 subjects taped to date: country singer Loretta Lynn, former Kentucky Gov. A.B. "Happy" Chandler, heavyweight boxing champ Jimmy Ellis, Kentucky speaker of the house Don Blandford, and baseball hall of famer Pee Wee Reese.

All the tapes are on file at the Henderson Public Library, where they can be seen on a videoviewer. Many have also aired over the city's public access cable TV channel.

Dealing with well-known people gives kids in the program great self-confidence, notes Pullam. "They come in like moths and leave like butterflies." □

Mark Berry

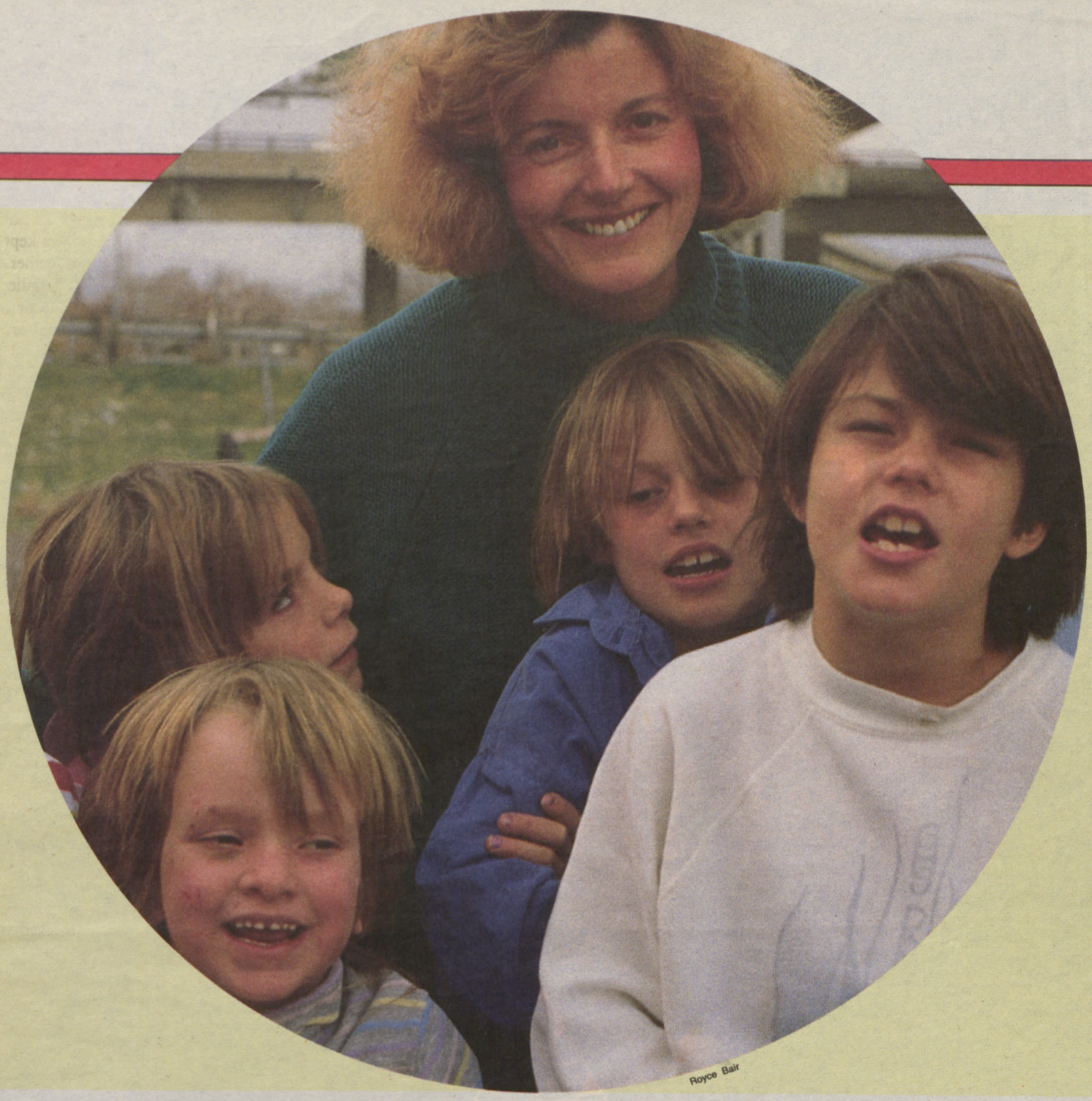
Mindy Schauer

For 20 teachers, administrators, and educational support workers at Whitwell Elementary School in the southern Ohio city of Ironton, Oct. 8, 1987, was a historic day.

That's the date they found out they'd won $9 million in the state lottery. Their luck was almost unbelievable, say Ironton Education Association President **Linda Mann** (*photo, center*) and Association members **Mariam Thomas** (*left*) and **Norma Bruce** (*right*).

Each week for three years the 20 coworkers had jointly purchased 20 $1 lottery tickets and never won a thing.

"Reality probably won't set in until we receive our first checks," Mann predicts. Each winner will get about $6,000 a year for the next 20 years, after taxes. □



Royce Bair

Down by the railroad tracks, right under Interstate 15, Salt Lake City Education Association member **Marilyn Treshow** runs a one-room school for children from homeless families.

In 1984, district officials—realizing that many of these children weren't in school—set up a classroom next to the homeless shelter in a temporary building. Students stay an average of six to eight weeks, during which Treshow teaches them whatever she can. The classroom usually serves 10 to 15 kids at a time, "though I've had as many as 35," she says.

"I have to be satisfied," Treshow explains, "with small accomplishments—like a child's progress in reading—and with just being someone the kids can count on each day." □

Rick Musacchio

When Ginger Townzen of Mt. Juliet, Tenn., wore a badge to school proclaiming that she'd been a sucker, the repercussions reached all the way to the statehouse and back.

"I helped elect a governor who promised me a $4,000 raise," Townzen explained. "Instead I'm getting about $635."

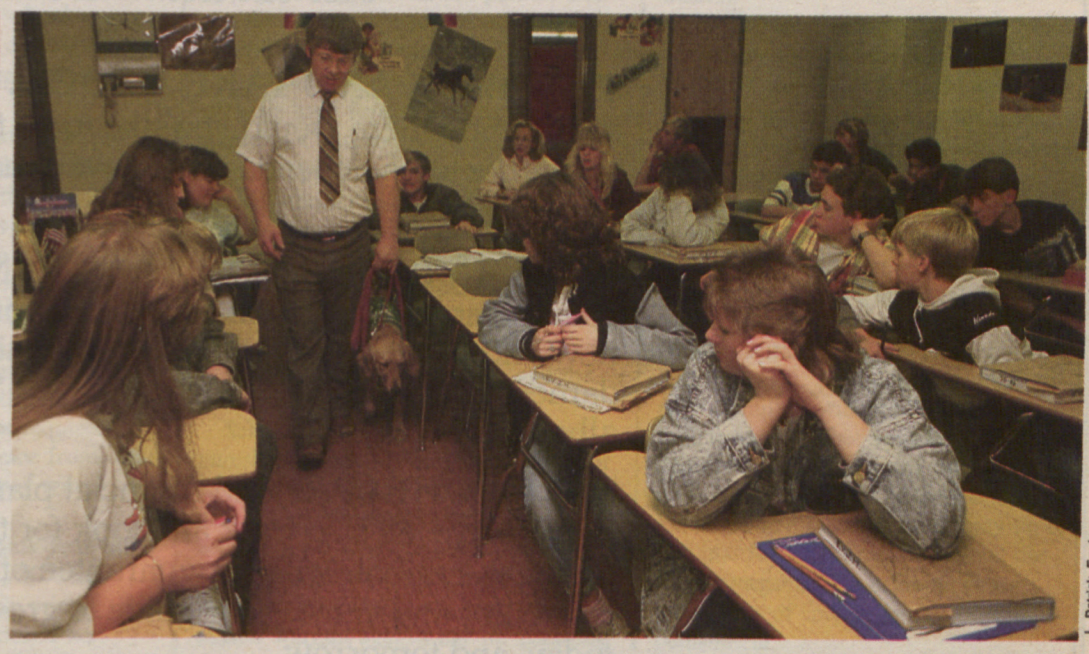
Townzen had been active in Gov. Ned McWherter's 1986 campaign, during which he pledged to raise teachers' starting salaries to $18,500. Once in office, though, McWherter recommended only a 4 percent across-the-board raise.

Townzen's sixth graders at Mt. Juliet Elementary School were intrigued with her "sucker" badge. One of them called the local newspaper. The story spread quickly. When Townzen went to Nashville to lobby shortly afterward, the governor picked her out of the crowd.

"You're not the sucker, Ginger—I am," McWherter apologized, explaining that he hadn't found the resources to recommend the starting salary right away, as he'd hoped.

Townzen's school board reacted by placing a letter in her personnel file reprimanding her for "rebel" activities. Townzen, the chief negotiator for the Wilson County Education Association, sought to have the letter removed, but the board stood firm.

Townzen has no regrets. "The Association members are all fired up over this," she says. "Together we can move forward." □



J. Patrick Forden

What's a golden retriever doing in an English classroom at Eagle Valley Junior High in Carson City, Nevada?

Marna, a six-month-old guide dog in training, was brought to class by Association activist **Richard Scott**, who's been a volunteer trainer of guide dogs for three years.

He gets the dogs from the San Rafael (Calif.) School for the Blind when they're 8 to 10 weeks old and keeps them for 12 to 14 months. The training includes a weekly 4-H Club class and a minimum daily half-hour training session.

"We teach the dogs basic commands," says Scott, "and expose them to many different, potentially frightening, situations—shopping centers, restaurants, buses, planes."

After investing so much time and energy, it's not easy to give up a dog, Scott adds. "There are always a lot of tears in our family when we return the dog to the school for the blind." □

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YOU AND THE LAW

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LET THE PADDLER BEWARE

Corporal punishment is still legal in 41 states. But the laws don't necessarily protect teachers and other school employees who swing the paddle.

At least 2 million U.S. schoolchildren are physically punished each year, according to a recent report by Temple University's National Center for the Study of Corporal Punishment and Alternatives in the Schools. The Center's data show that children in rural, southern, or poor school districts are more likely to be beaten—as are those in larger classes.

Corporal punishment doesn't teach better behavior, the report argues. What's more, such punishment may arouse in students the very kind of aggression it's meant to discourage.

Besides physical injury, the National Center points out, corporal punishment may cause long-lasting psychological problems, identified as post-traumatic stress disorder. Most school districts that have eliminated corporal punishment have no more disciplinary problems than they did when paddling was permitted, and some have fewer.

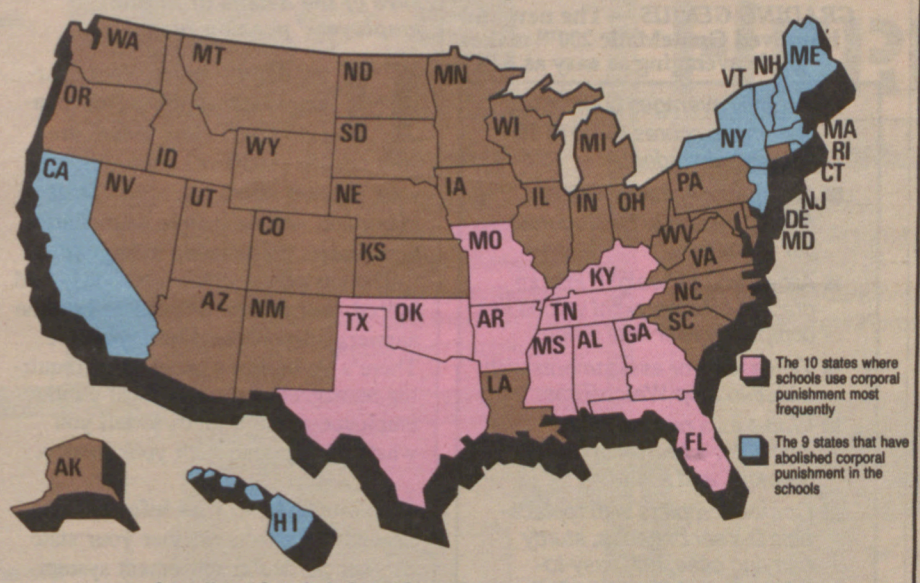
After a heated debate, a majority of the more than 8,000 delegates to the 1987 NEA Representative Assembly voted to adopt a resolution opposing the use of corporal punishment in the schools. The American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, and National PTA had already gone on record against corporal punishment.

Although the NEA resolution doesn't change the benefits available under NEA's liability insurance policy to members who are sued for administering corporal punishment, those who work in school districts where corporal punishment is allowed may want to think twice before exercising this power. A survey of recent court cases by NEA's Office of General Counsel reveals that angry parents are hauling teachers into court in increasing numbers, charging child abuse and criminal assault and suing for monetary damages.

Many observers believed that the question of corporal punishment's constitutionality was decided 10 years ago, when the Supreme Court ruled in *Ingraham v. Wright* that even severe corporal punishment doesn't violate the Eighth Amendment's prohibition of "cruel and unusual" punishment. Child advocates, however, have since propounded a new constitutional theory that's been accepted by the Fourth, Fifth, and Tenth Circuit Courts of Appeals.

These courts have ruled that excessive corporal punishment violates the substantive due process rights of students under the 14th Amendment. While "limited" or "reasonable" corporal punishment still is permissible in most states, physical punishment that causes such severe injury as to shock the conscience is now actionable in federal court in a number of states, regardless of state law.

In addition, one federal appeals court has ruled that a teacher can be sued for racial discrimination for administering corporal punishment to a Black student but not to a white student who engaged in the same misconduct.



Source: National Center for the Study of Corporal Punishment and Alternatives in the Schools, Temple University.

In addition to these recent federal cases, several state courts have permitted civil lawsuits against school employees for the use of excessive force, even where corporal punishment is legal.

Unfortunately, the courts have provided little guidance for determining when a paddling crosses the line from "reasonable" to "excessive." Typically, the question will be decided by a jury, and NEA's survey of legal cases reveals that school officials usually prevail. But if the student and parents can show that the punishment inflicted pain that lasted for several days or caused physical injury that required medical treatment or absence from school, then the student may win.

Consider the case of nine-year-old Teresa Garcia of Penasco, N. Mex. Her "crime" was relatively minor: she had punched a boy who kicked her. But when she refused to allow the school principal to paddle her, the principal summoned a teacher for assistance. While the teacher held Teresa upside down by the ankles, the principal hit her five times on the front of her thighs with a split wooden paddle, until she bled. The split paddle opened a gash that left a permanent scar.

Teresa also was paddled several months later—this time on her buttocks—for saying that a teacher had kissed a student's father. The beatings were so severe that a nurse who examined Teresa testified that if a child had received this type of injury at home, she "would have called [the police department's] Protective Services."

Teresa's case went to court as *Garcia v. Miera*, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit ruled last spring that Teresa and her parents can sue the responsible school officials in federal court for violation of her constitutional rights. The school officials have formally asked the Supreme Court to review the case. As we go to press the Court has yet to decide whether to accept the appeal.

Less than a month after the *Garcia* decision, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the parents of an eight-year-old girl who'd been tied to a chair for most of the school day could sue the teacher, the principal, and the school district.

School employees who use corporal punishment risk not only being sued for damages but also, in particularly egregious cases, being criminally prosecuted. A 60-year-old NEA member in Georgia was arrested and jailed after irate parents swore out a criminal assault warrant against her for paddling their child. In Louisiana two years ago, a special education teacher was convicted of cruelty to a juvenile and sentenced to 18 months' hard labor for administering excessive corporal punishment to a student. Although an appellate court set aside the sentence as unduly harsh, the conviction was affirmed and sent back to the trial court for resentencing.

Corporal punishment can also cost teachers their jobs. A Missouri court, for example, recently upheld the discharge of a 36-year veteran teacher for slapping a student. Courts in Illinois, Louisiana, and Washington have all sustained teacher terminations for using corporal punishment in violation of school board policy. Other courts have ruled that a single incident of improper corporal punishment did not justify dismissal because such misconduct was remediable.

Finally, the use of corporal punishment may provoke a physical assault on the disciplinarian. That's what happened to Elsie McGowan, an assistant principal in Pell City, Alabama. She was struck in the head three times with a 22-inch paddle by the angry mother of a student she had paddled. Last November the parent was convicted of assault and sentenced to five years in the state penitentiary.

What can a school employee who may legally use corporal punishment do to minimize the risk of being sued, fired, or arrested?

- ► Be familiar with and follow school district policies on the imposition of corporal punishment. Failure to abide by school rules can be grounds for dismissal.
- ► Always have an adult witness present. Corroborating testimony can help win a lawsuit.
- ► Never hit any part of the student's body other than the buttocks. Don't punch, shove, or slap a student. (An employee can, of course, use reasonable force to restrain a student who poses an imminent threat of harm to others).
- ► Never use excessive force or administer more than a few blows.
- ► Never use corporal punishment for petty infractions of rules or for a student's inability or unwillingness to perform schoolwork.

An NEA member who is sued or arrested for administering corporal punishment in the course of his or her employment is covered by NEA's Educator's Employment Liability (EEL) insurance policy. Under the EEL program, the Horace Mann Insurance Company will pay for an attorney to defend a member sued for civil damages and will pay any civil judgment up to $1 million if the member loses. Horace Mann also will pay up to $25,000 for an attorney to defend the member against any criminal charges arising out of such corporal punishment.

But the best legal advice is simply not to use corporal punishment at all. The emotional and professional damage caused by the mere accusation of child abuse can have a devastating impact even if the employee is ultimately vindicated.

—Mike Simpson,
NEA Office of General Counsel

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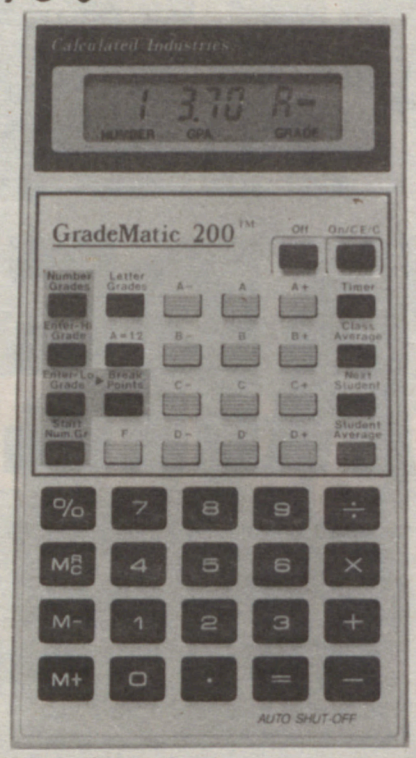

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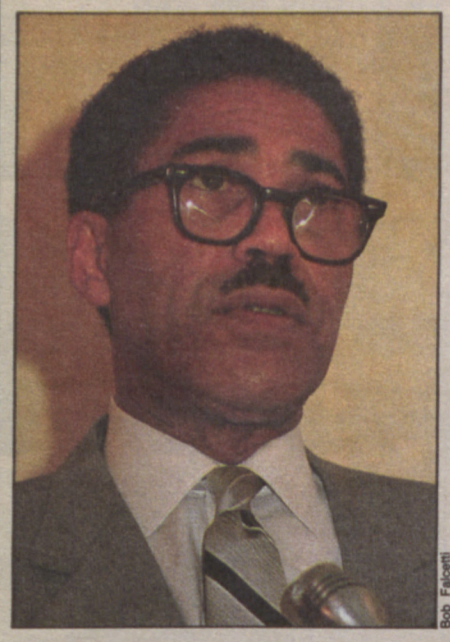
YOU AND YOUR RETIREMENT

NEA Forum Probes Pension Issues


Bob Falcetti

Rep. Bill Clay (D-Mo.) urges support of PEPPRA, a federal bill that would mandate fuller disclosure of the details of public employees' pension plans.

How did the recent stock market nosedive affect your pension fund? How secure are your benefit promises? How well are your pension assets managed? Most important, are the people who control those assets accountable to anyone?

The answers to these questions—and indeed your chance of even getting the answers—depend on where you live. There's no uniform set of rules requiring managers of state or local public employee pension funds to tell you what's being done with your money.

"Your right to that information depends solely on whether your state or your particular retirement system voluntarily decides to make it available," Rep. Bill Clay (D-Mo.) told nearly 150 participants at NEA's annual Retirement and Benefits Forum, this past November in Clearwater, Fla.

Rep. Clay, who chairs the House Labor-Management Relations Subcommittee, spoke at a session devoted to the need for better reporting and accountability requirements for public employee pension plans—plans worth a combined total of at least $300 billion.

Details of pension plans are primarily the business of state and local governments, their employees, and taxpayers in those jurisdictions, Rep. Clay conceded. But, he argued, there's a strong *federal* interest and responsibility in ensuring that accurate and adequate information about the operations and financial status of public employee pension plans is available.

Rep. Clay has long been pushing for a bill that would set federal reporting, disclosure, and fiduciary standards for these plans. His NEA-backed bill is called the Public Employee Pension Plan Reporting and Accountability Act (PEPPRA). Clay plans to reintroduce PEPPRA early this year.

Opponents view PEPPRA as an unwanted federal "foot in the door."

"They act as if state and local pension plans were not already subject to extensive federal regulation through the Internal Revenue Code," Clay noted.

PEPPRA strikes a balance, he said, by protecting the interests of plan participants and taxpayers while causing the least possible disruption to sound state and local programs.

The push for stricter pension plan reporting and disclosure standards is just one of many current legislative issues on which local and state Associations need to make their political power felt, conferees learned. Restoration of the three-year-basis recovery rule is another.

For 50 years this provision had exempted public and private sector employee retirement benefits from federal taxes for the initial 36 months, or until new retirees had "recovered" the money they'd contributed over the years to their own pension plan—money already taxed as income when it was earned.

The sweeping Tax Reform Act of 1986 retroactively eliminated this rule, NEA Congressional Relations Manager Michael Edwards reminded the conferees. The result: many retirees will pay significantly higher taxes in their initial retirement years.

Rep. Marty Russo (D-Ill.) has introduced legislation to restore the three-year recovery rule. As we go to press his bill, H.R. 1007, has garnered 100 cosponsors in the House.

"But many in Congress are reluctant to reopen any aspect of the Tax Reform Act," Edwards reported. "They've been through a political firestorm over it—and now face a devastating budget deficit."

What can NEA members do?

"We must convince members of Congress that neither the financial considerations nor the uncomfortable position of dealing with the Tax Reform Act should prevent their addressing an issue so fundamental to every working American," Edwards urged. Specifically, he suggested—

► Make sure your colleagues are well informed about the three-year-basis recovery rule. To get the latest information on this and other legislative issues, call NEA's toll-free National Legislative Hotline (1/800/424-8086).

► Write your representative in Congress, urging him or her to cosponsor H.R. 1007. The address is The Honorable (name of representative), U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20510,

► Organize a letter or postcard campaign.

► Visit the district office of your U.S. representative with a coalition of business, labor, and professional groups to secure help in passing this proposal.

—Marian Clayton

For additional coverage of the 1987 NEA Retirement and Benefits Forum, see the winter issue of the NEA-Retired Update, a newsletter mailed to all NEA-R members.

MISSING CHILDREN

RECOGNIZE ANYONE HERE?

Andrea Lynn Stockton
Born: 1/6/83
Last seen: 2/25/87
3'3", 45 lbs., blonde hair, blue eyes, cowlick, strawberry birthmark on back of neck.

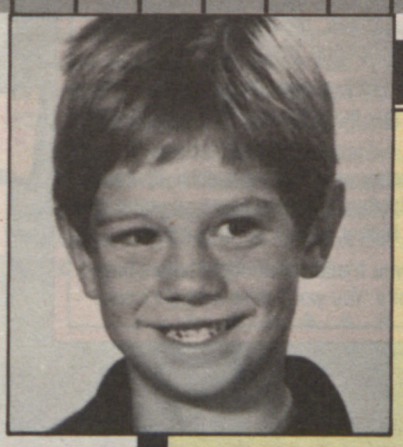
Adrian Emmanuel Lainez*
Born: 1/18/82
Last seen: 2/1/86 in Pasadena, Calif. 3'6", brown eyes, black hair, green-brown birthmark on lower left leg.

Jesse Mark Rinker
Born: 12/31/84
Last seen: 5/4/87 on Sun Child Indian Reservation, Alberta, Canada. 2'11", 31 lbs., brown eyes, blond hair.

April Ann Cooper
Born: 5/13/79
Last seen: 12/13/86
in Rancho, Calif.
4'6", 60 lbs.,
blue eyes, blonde hair.

Tammy Lynn Maciulis
Born: 12/22/75
Last seen: 7/10/87.
5'1", 62 lbs., brown hair, blue eyes, brown dime-size mark on each temple near hairline.

Lien Cam-Thi Hoang*
Born: 4/18/81
Last seen: 9/15/84
in Alexandria, La.
3', 40 lbs., dark brown eyes, very dark brown hair.



The children pictured on this page have disappeared from their homes. They've been reported to NEA by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, a nonprofit organization funded through the U.S. Department of Justice.

If you think you've seen any of these youngsters, please contact the Center immediately at **1/800/843-5678.**

Michael James Egan*
Born: 6/15/80
Last seen: 8/17/87
4'5", 53 lbs.,
brown hair, hazel eyes.

Marta June
Born: 2/19/85
Last seen: 8/2/86
in Berkeley, Calif., with mother who is also missing and pictured above.
2'6", 20 lbs.,
brown hair, brown eyes.

Susan Robin Bender
Born: 11/27/70
Last seen: 4/25/86
in Modesto, Calif.
5'5", 130 lbs.,
black hair, brown eyes.

Jason Stephen Bunn
Born: 9/20/82
Last seen: 10/19/84
2'4", 30 lbs.,
blond hair, blue eyes.

* Children with asterisks after their names are believed to have been abducted by their noncustodial parents—and are more likely than stranger abducted children to turn up in schools, the Center suggests.

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PERSONALLY SPEAKING

It's Tax Time Again

Are You Ready?

If you've been following the developments brought about by the Tax Reform Act of 1986, you know you'll be doing many things differently when you file your tax return this year. If you've been ignoring these changes and hoping they'll just go away, now's the time to take your head out of the sand.

Tax rates are down, standard deductions and personal exemptions are up, and many popular tax shelters and deductions are either gone or much harder to qualify for. Even if you've had no trouble preparing your returns in the past, you should give yourself some extra time this year to familiarize yourself with the new laws and make sure you're not paying more than your fair share.

The Internal Revenue Service offers a free guide to how the new changes will affect you. Pick it up at any IRS office, or order it by calling 1/800/424-3676. Ask for Publication 920, *Explanation of the Tax Reform Act of 1986 for Individuals*.

For more specialized information, turn to *The NEA Federal Income Tax Guide for Education Employees*. This newly updated, 160-page book is available for $6.95 from the NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516 (stock no. 1463-4-00-D).

Thinking Ahead To April '89

Although it may be the last thing you want to think about, your planning for 1988 taxes, which are due in April '89, should begin as soon as you've completed your 1987 return. While everything is fresh in your mind, consider what actions you could take to ensure that next year's tax bite won't be so painful.

First, estimate what your marginal federal tax bracket is. This year it's simple enough to do—there are only three brackets! Take your taxable income (line 36 on your 1040), add any extra income you expect in the coming year, and find your marginal bracket on the table below. Your marginal rate tells you what percentage of each extra dollar you earn goes to the government—essential information for tax planning.

Next, resolve to keep a running tally of certain expenses during the year. Since you can only deduct job-related expenses in excess of 2 percent of your gross adjusted income, and medical expenses in excess of 7.5 percent, you should know whether you're coming near to the threshold. If you do, you should consider moving certain expenses from 1989 to 1988—have elective surgery or buy new office equipment, for instance.

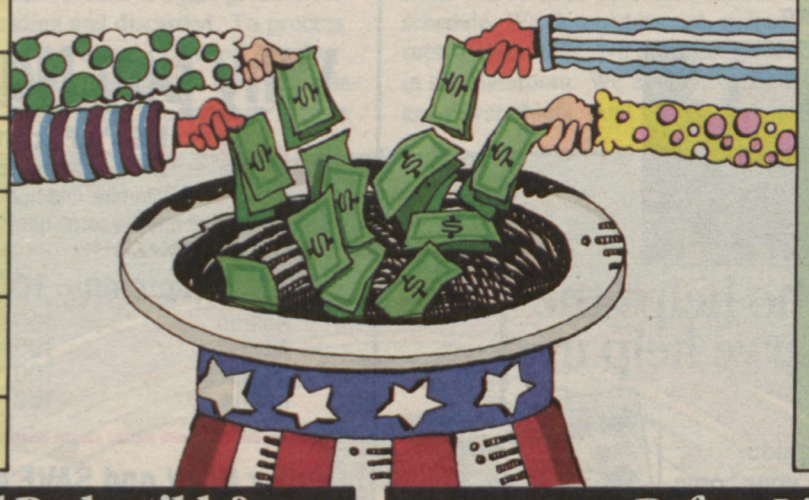
Did you deduct any interest you paid in 1987? Remember that in 1988 you'll be able to deduct only 40 percent of your consumer interest expenses. Consider paying off your debts in 1988, using a home equity loan if you don't have the cash.

The rules governing deductibility of interest have become tricky. Interest charges may be treated differently depending on whether the money was borrowed for personal, investment, business, medical, or tuition purposes. If you borrow money in 1988, be sure to place it in a separate bank account so you can prove to the IRS what it was used for.

Were your children under age 14 hit with the "Kiddie Tax" in 1987? Consider EE Savings Bonds or other investments that allow them to defer interest until after age 14, when they'll no longer be taxed at your rate.

If any of your children work, consider whether an IRA might be appropriate for them.

1988 Taxable Income	*Marginal Tax Rate*
Up to $17,850 single Up to $29,750 married filing jointly	15 percent
From $17,851 through $43,150 single From $29,751 through $71,900 married filing jointly	28 percent
From $43,151 through $100,480 single From $71,901 through $171,090 married filing jointly	33 percent
Over $100,481 single Over $171,091 married filing jointly	28 percent



Are There Any Tax Shelters Left?

The tax shelter business ain't what it used to be. Not only has the new tax law limited or eliminated the abusive tax-dodging schemes popular with the rich, but lower tax rates have removed much of the incentive to invest in unproductive projects merely for the write-offs.

But what about the average taxpayer? Are there any ways left to lower *your* taxes?

First, remember that you must know your marginal tax rate before you can intelligently consider "tax-advantaged" investments. In 1988 there'll be only three tax brackets—15, 28, and 33 percent. If you're in the lowest bracket, a $1,000 deduction will be worth only $150.

Assuming it's worth your while, here are some investments to consider for lowering next year's taxes:

► *Individual Retirement Accounts.* New restrictions have been placed on IRA contributions for upper-income taxpayers and those covered by employer-maintained pension plans. It's estimated that only half of all NEA members will be able to contribute the full amount in 1988. Still, if your family's income is less than $50,000 ($35,000 for individuals), don't ignore IRAs.

► *Tax-Deferred Annuities.* Good TDAs are looking better than ever. Education employees who qualify under section 403(b) can still make TDA contributions in addition to—and much higher than—their IRA contributions. But finding the TDA that's right for you is not easy. For a consumer guide and workbook on selecting TDAs, write to the NEA Special Services Response Center, 51 Monroe St., Suite 200, Rockville, MD 20850.

► *Real Estate.* Your home is still a good tax shelter—and so may be a vacation home that you use more than two weeks a year. Check with your tax adviser.

► *Municipal Bonds.* The interest you earn is free of federal taxes—and maybe state taxes too. But beware; a certain degree of risk is involved. Be sure the tax savings are worth it.

► *Single Premium Life Insurance.* Insurance agents have been aggressively marketing these policies as one of the few tax shelters left. Remember, however, that they're insurance first and an investment second. Don't buy unnecessary coverage just to save on taxes until you've considered all the alternatives.

Association Dues: Still Deductible?

Many people assume Association dues are no longer tax-deductible. In fact, while it's harder to qualify for the deduction, the tax status of your dues has not changed if you itemize.

"Miscellaneous" expenses are now deductible only to the extent that they exceed 2 percent of adjusted gross income. Dues alone won't reach this threshold. But before you despair, consider the many other expenses that may fall in the "miscellaneous" category, such as tuition, some magazines, tax advice, classroom supplies, research and job-hunting costs, and credential and license renewals. Also, two big-ticket items—moving expenses and job-related travel—have been added to the "miscellaneous deductions" category this year.

Of course there are conditions that go with these expenses before they can be considered legitimate deductions. Get a good tax book, or seek professional help, if you think you can break the 2 percent barrier.

Before It's Too Late...

At this point you should be planning for 1988, because it's too late to do much about changing your 1987 tax picture. But here are three things you may still need to do to get your 1987 returns in order:

► *Get a Social Security number for any dependents over age 5.* If you claim them as dependents, you must list their Social Security numbers or face a fine. Go to the nearest Post Office or Social Security Office and ask for Form SS-5. You'll also need an original birth certificate or certified copy, so don't procrastinate.

► *If you don't have a 1987 IRA, start shopping now.* Don't wait until April to decide where to put your contribution.

► *Be sure you have all the tax forms you need.* With so many changes this year, allow yourself some extra time. If schedules you need are not in the tax package sent by the IRS, pick them up as soon as possible.

BOOK BEAT

Public Schools: Was There a Road Not Taken?

This is history with a present-day purpose. In *Reconstructing American Education,* historian Michael Katz attacks the once-standard view of American educational history as a story of progressive improvement. In its place he substitutes a critical account of how big-city school systems turned into increasingly unwieldy bureaucracies in the 19th century.

In Katz's view, these centralized bureaucratic systems are still stultifying American education at the end of the 20th century. He argues that bureaucracy was only one of several organizational possibilities for education. It triumphed,

RECONSTRUCTING AMERICAN EDUCATION

by Michael B. Katz

(Harvard University Press, 212 pp. $22.50)

he thinks, for reasons rooted in 19th century society and culture, rather than because it was inevitable. By stripping bureaucracy of its aura of inevitability, Katz hopes to free our thinking today for the task of reconstructing schools along better lines.

Now a professor of history at the University of Pennsylvania, Katz is preeminent among the "revisionist" historians of American education, whose work began appearing in the late 1960s. Highly critical of modern public schooling, the revisionists charged that throughout its history public education has been shaped by racial bias, class interest, and repressive administration and pedagogy.

The essays in this collection are a good introduction to Katz's controversial ideas—and controversial they are. Education historian Diane Ravitch of Teachers College, Columbia University, in *The Revisionists Revised: A Critique of the Radical Attack on the Schools*, has dismissed the revisionists as polemical ideologues. In this volume Katz counterattacks vigorously but not quite effectively.

His antipathies—dislike of bureaucracy, suspicion of government agencies, distaste for the order and regularity demanded by business leaders and school administrators—do indeed bear the stamp of the 1960s. But Katz is no callow polemicist. After 20 years of studying the history of education and social welfare, he knows well the difficulties of social change.

In Katz's interpretation, the great turning point in American education was the creation of centralized, bureaucratic big-city school systems after about 1850. These promised local business a disciplined workforce, assuaged fears of religious and ethnic diversity triggered by mass immigration, and offered educational advancement for middle class children.

How inevitable was the bureaucratic triumph? Katz describes three other organizational possibilities, yet it seems to me he repeatedly undercuts his own argument about their viability.

"Paternalistic voluntarism" is the name Katz gives to the approach taken by the New York Public School Society of the 1830s. The schools controlled by this body of gentlemen amateurs drilled orderly habits and rudimentary literacy into masses of poor children. But the taint of charity alienated middle class parents, while advocates of public schools successfully branded private control as undemocratic.

"Democratic localism," which put each individual school under its own elected board, was inefficient in urban settings and risked creation of little majoritarian tyrannies every dozen blocks. A rural arrangement, it never really reached the cities except in visionary schemes.

"Corporate voluntarism" was more promising. Academies run by self-perpetuating, unelected trustees proved inexpensive and adaptable. In many communities, they furnished most secondary education well past 1850. Yet academies too succumbed to demands for public control.

Faced with this record of failed alternatives, Katz can only assert that the triumph of centralized bureaucracies, nominally controlled by elected boards, did not seem inevitable to 19th century Americans—although it may seem so to us today.

Katz's case study of Boston starts late, around 1873, with the discovery by lay reformers that professional schoolmen had already built a "hierarchical, differentiated, uniform, and rigid" organization. In an effort to reduce the school superintendent's powers, the reformers appointed roving supervisors whose powers overlapped the superintendent's. They also hired the charismatic Francis Parker to revamp primary schooling. Yet by 1884—after bitter controversy—Parker was gone, the superintendent was officially sole head of the system, and Boston's school bureaucracy was "complete."

Katz again asserts that bureaucracy was not inevitable, but his account suggests that reformers had little idea how to counteract it. Once in place, the bureaucratized school system led, in Katz's view, straight to the problems of the 1960s.

If his thesis seems oversimplified, it's because Katz has an undifferentiated, essentially pejorative concept of bureaucracy, which obscures the variations bureaucracy has undergone over time. Moreover, his book chronicles history from the top down: the responses of teachers go virtually unmentioned.

Katz recognizes complicating factors: reformers were often parochial and stingy; Protestant and democratic ideology as well as class interest spurred the drive for centralized public control of schools; and the schools failed in large part because Americans tried to substitute educational reform for the harder task of curing poverty and inequality.

Still, bureaucracy remains Katz's Goliath. Gripped by yearning for the 19th century's failed alternatives, Katz mentions favorably the idea of schools that are "funded by taxes but owned by boards of parents." For the elaborately structured central office and centralized school board, he would substitute a blend of democratic localism with the old academy approach, abandoning the idea that public financing requires governmental management of schools.

In this vein Katz is still the 19th century romantic, using history to pursue "what might have been." In a more practical vein, however, he does have valuable advice:

"Reform from the top down simply does not work very well," Katz concludes. "What does work sometimes... is reform undertaken at the level of the individual school. Change...proceeds best on a school-by-school basis, initiated by strong and effective principals, supported by teachers, parents, and students."

Reviewed by David Macleod, history professor at Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, and member of the CMU Faculty Association.

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SOUNDING BOARD

If Only We Had 180 Days for *Teaching*

by Dorothy S. Kelly

So far the reform movement has failed to come up with solutions to two universal teacher laments: student absences from class and the blizzard of useless paperwork.

Miles of print and hours of TV and radio time have been devoted to the problems that exist in public education. Self-proclaimed experts offer the "quick fix." But in spite of all the rhetoric, two serious problems still aren't being addressed.

They both affect the senior high school primarily. The first problem is absence from class—*not* due to illness (whether real or imagined).

Here's just a partial list of the "reasons for absence" recently documented by a single classroom teacher at my school: family vacation, counselor appointment, medical appointment, dental appointment, PSATs, ERB and EQA tests, SAT workshop, district band, band sectionals, district chorus, choral rehearsal, choral program, exchange concert, religious holiday, blood drive, tech school presentation, field trip, service club luncheon, photographs, college visitation, military scholarship interview and physical, driver training, gifted program apprenticeship, candy distribution for junior class, candy distribution for Spanish club, beginning-of-school orientation assembly, academic competition, in-school suspension in the principal's office, senior trip, band trip, National Honor Society trip, chorus trip, Europe trip, student council meeting, intramurals, golf meet, swim meet, "excused early for sports," and "excused early for prom."

Everyone feels his or her "reason" for a student's absence is justified. But the problem goes beyond individual student absences. Whole classes are eliminated or abbreviated because of special assembly programs or weather conditions. Club days and pep rally days result in shortened class periods in either the morning or afternoon. One period was lost because a coach who resigned called all the football players to a meeting. Another was lost when the superintendent called an assembly to introduce the new principal—who had already been here two years as an assistant.

For science lab classes like mine, all these absences spell disaster. Sometimes the abbreviated or eliminated class makes it impossible to perform or complete an experiment. Makeups are out of the question. The few minutes between classes hardly suffice to respond to "What did we do yesterday?" or "What are we going to do tomorrow?" or "Did I miss anything?"

Complaints to the building administration elicit such replies as "It's the same everywhere." Complaints to the president of the school board bring a friendly putdown: "Students learn more from trips than in the classroom—sports is where the kids learn." A letter to all board members is met with silence.

But then the superintendent forms an "engaged time" committee. In essence a policy is formulated and approved, allowing a student to be excused for some activities with teacher permission. If this permission is denied, the student "turns off" learning. Tests are to be made up during the teacher's preparation time after the school day. The problem remains, with the onus on the classroom teacher.

In one nine-week grading period I documented that our 120 chemistry students had 477 absences for reasons other than illness—and were given 100 makeup tests.

The second problem plaguing the classroom teacher is paperwork. In addition to preparing study guides, worksheets, tests, and lesson plan books, we face surveys, memos, student lists, evaluation, requests for homework, forms and more forms ad infinitum.

Many new administrative positions have been created through the years. For each one there is a secretary to type, file, and distribute the memos, bulletins, letters, and documents. In the meantime, the teacher is occupying the same classroom with one file cabinet, a pencil sharpener, and a sheet of carbon paper. Each piece of paper that finds its way into the teacher's mailbox requires time to process—even if it's just given a cursory reading and discarded. To process one detention form, I clocked 29 minutes; a weekly lesson plan book, 25 minutes. Computerized report cards require an initial roster verification printout, a grade printout, and a post–report card verification.

This problem must be brought to the conscious awareness of those initiating the paperwork. As I see it, this paperwork falls into at least five categories: building, central office, county, state department of education, and routine classroom.

Hastily checked surveys result in the creation of programs and workshops, some of which take the teacher out of the classroom. This in turn requires a great deal of preplanning—and another mountain of paperwork to be processed when the teacher returns.

We do not need more review of Bloom's taxonomy, more time with Madeline Hunter, assertive discipline, ERB or EQA, or criterion-referenced tests. We do need scheduled classes on schedule. We do need sacred, uninterrupted class time. We need the student in the classroom. We need more Indians and fewer chiefs. And we teachers need thinking time, time to read, time to prepare new materials.

Any complaint tags the teacher who makes it as being negative. Board members don't understand the problem. The superintendent is far removed from the front lines. In fact, the superintendent may never have served in a classroom at all, or only briefly a long time ago. It can be years since he even *visited* a classroom.

All kinds of studies have shown that my school isn't atypical; coast to coast, students are kept from learning by school-generated interruptions, and teachers are kept from teaching preparation by excessive paperwork. But school administrators don't seem concerned. Neither do education researchers, or the schools of education.

Hunter and others talk of time on task, but they don't deal with time *for* the task. Perhaps a business or foundation would underwrite the cost of a time-and-motion study of the classroom teacher. We need to know what percentage of time is spent on noninstructional classroom management and what percentage on lesson preparation. I bet the results would be startling—except to the classroom teacher who has lived with the problems.

Pennsylvania school law mandates a minimum of 180 days of school a year. Only the classroom teacher knows what actually occurs during those 180 days. Any measures taken to improve education will be merely palliative if they don't provide relief from the student absence and paperwork problems; they'll treat symptoms but not the disease.

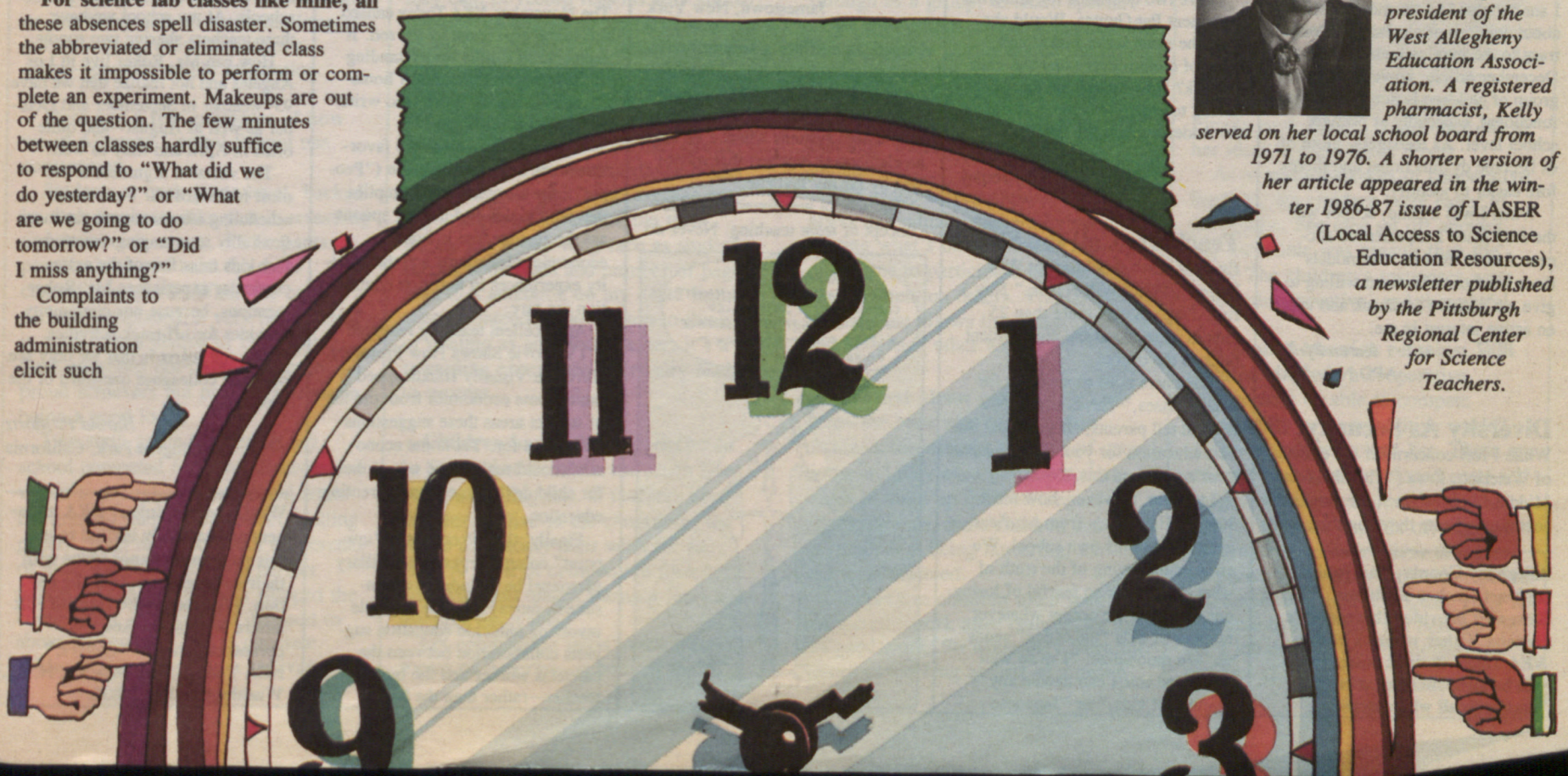
If McDonald's paid as little attention to the use of its employees' time as the schools do, we might never have heard of the Big Mac. □

Readers, Let Us Hear from You!

Has your school or district come up with a solution for either of the problems Dorothy Kelly sounds off about on this page? Tell us about it, in 400 words or less. We'll publish the best ideas in the May *NEA Today*.

Please mail your letter or postcard to Absences/Paperwork Poll, *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, no later than March 16. □

Dorothy Kelly has taught chemistry at West Allegheny Senior High in Imperial, Pa., for 20 years. She's immediate past president of the West Allegheny Education Association. A registered pharmacist, Kelly served on her local school board from 1971 to 1976. A shorter version of her article appeared in the winter 1986-87 issue of LASER (Local Access to Science Education Resources), *a newsletter published by the Pittsburgh Regional Center for Science Teachers.*



Letters

Education Too Early?

I was pleased to see the cover story about how young children's needs are being met ("Here Come the Four-Year-Olds," Dec.). Some of these programs seem to provide appropriate activities, but the picture of a child tediously writing and the mention of four-year-olds making the *K* sound are not necessarily appropriate.

As a kindergarten teacher for more than 15 years I have seen many changes. Academics have increased to such a degree that many kindergartens have become junior first grades. Before public schools take on four-year-olds they need to evaluate their present primary programs. Many young children are not being provided developmentally appropriate activities and materials. The push for academics and test scores has taken priority over the social, emotional, and developmental needs of young children.

Kindergartners today have had more preschool and day care experiences than their predecessors, but their developmental ages and needs have not changed. The quality of primary programs in public schools must improve before meeting the challenge of four-year-olds.

Lorraine Buhrmann
Alexandria, Virginia

Children of Alcoholics

I am delighted to see more publicity about children of alcoholics. Contrary to the implications of your December article, however, this group of children is not always dysfunctional, especially at primary school level. As teenagers, more of us become dysfunctional and therefore easier to identify.

When I was a child, school was the *only* place I experienced success. I have used as role models those teachers who were willing to give me positive feedback and take an active interest in me.

Karen Pfeifer
APO New York

Diversity As Security?

While I feel concern for the citizens of Waterloo, Iowa ("The Shrinking Middle Class," Dec.), the situation seems to indicate they dug their own grave. This city of roughly 75,000 people had better than 40 percent of its workforce employed at just two factories!

Most any eighth grade student I teach understands the terrible vulnerability of monocultures in forestry and farming; why then is our society so blind to the same situations in business? Just as giant fields of one crop invite insect devastation, huge specialized factories fall easy prey to changing economies.

My students' advice? Diversify and divide, creating many smaller businesses controlled at the local level, reducing the impact of distant market decisions.

Ah, but that might mean lower salaries. As a teacher I am no stranger to standing up for fair compensation, but really now—$24 an hour plus benefits? Is it possible that through conservation, thriftiness, and plain old "doing without" we might survive on less than $50,000 a year?

Many gung ho teachers unions obviously think not, as evidenced by the *NEA Today* "Local Look" column's many reports of new contracts paying $45,000 or $50,000 a year and up. Have these unions considered the effect on their communities? Or will they learn too late, as Waterloo has, that when we overstep responsible limits, Mother Nature and the economy are waiting with very stiff service charges?

Rodd Pemble
Chattanooga, Tennessee

Uniforms for Students?

In response to the December debate about students' being required to wear uniforms to school, I must agree with Reba Evans that this policy would be a bad one.

It is difficult enough to require that students wear a standard physical education uniform for the reasons mentioned by Ms. Evans—expense, seasonal weather changes, etc. Requiring daily school uniforms would be even more impractical.

I have two questions for uniforms proponent Pat Gunter. Would she wear the same style, make, and color of clothes every day she goes to work? How would she feel about having to wear the same uniform as the students while she teaches?

Anthony Orlando
Bloomfield, New Jersey

Teachers: Call the Shots

Every teacher should adopt Will Hayes' ("Meet Will Hayes," Nov.) rule: Don't accept more than 25 kids in class. Send the 26th student back to the office.

"Teachers need to stand up for small classes," Hayes says. "We need to tell parents, 'If you want the best education for your child, I need your support on this.'"

I wonder, however, how much support Hayes gets from *teachers*, even those in his own school. We are so unbelieving of the truth of what he says, or so fearful of losing our jobs, that we accept whatever number of kids "the office" sends us. We rationalize: "I'm so well organized that I can handle any number of kids," or "Japanese teachers handle up to 50 kids in their classes," or "Sister Mary Teresa taught 60 kids in my sixth grade class, and I learned a lot."

"Horace's Compromise," right? I think Ted Sizer has it right: we take on large numbers of kids because we feel they have the right to be taught, and we want to teach them, but the kids don't learn as much as they need to know, because we *can't* teach them well. So we "go along"; we continue to collect our paychecks. The students are simply passed on and collect their diplomas.

The children of the privileged do not have to compete with 25 to 35 other kids for the attention of the teacher. Research has shown that small classes (6 to 15) are an important contributor to the success of elite boarding schools in placing their graduates in high-prestige colleges. Public school teachers tend to get defensive when one points this out. They protest, "*We* teach *all* the children; they teach only the select few." Precisely, but do we teach *all* our children as well as they teach those few? Do we teach our *best and brightest* as well as they teach their most ordinary students?

John Schuh
APO New York

Open Classrooms

I couldn't agree more with Ken Miller's article "Open Classrooms: It's Time To Close Them" ("Sounding Board," Nov.).

Eight of my 10 years in elementary education have been spent in open classroom situations. No amount of cabinets, blackboards, or study carrels can block out the distraction to youngsters.

Open classrooms may or may not work if they are used in the way they were intended—cross-level grouping. However, it's impossible to try to run self-contained classrooms in an open environment, as is often the case.

It's time to put the walls and doors back and let our children get the education they deserve.

RoseAnn Purcell
Jamestown, New York

I resent Ken Miller's accusations against open classrooms. I taught for four years in an open classroom with a team of six teachers. Of the four school systems where I've been an elementary teacher, that school was by far my favorite.

The school was founded on the concept of *team* teaching. Never do I remember working in an "auditory crossfire." We respected one another and would never have knowingly taught lessons that distracted those next to us. Our lessons in science and social studies were unified and done at the same time. We grouped for audiovisual presentations.

Open classrooms and real team teaching go hand in hand. I was continually learning from my fellow instructors. I observed their teaching styles and learned many techniques I might not otherwise have experienced.

It was not really quiet in that school, but the sound was good sound—we were all learning together.

Leah Geiger
Mount Vernon, Ohio

HI MR. SMITH! REMEMBER ME? TOMMY McNUTT, CLASS OF '75! I JUST CALLED TO TELL YA I GOT THAT SCIENCE REPORT DONE — WHEN CAN I BRING IT IN?

The Power of PACs

I found "Westerners Raise the Political Ante" ("StateSide," Nov.) and "The Sorry State of Education in West Virginia" ("Local Look," Dec.) extremely interesting. Is it a coincidence that West Virginia ranks near the bottom in both teacher salaries and contributions to NEA-PAC?

When our legislature convened last January, Gov. Arch Moore proclaimed 1987 the "Year of Education," and what a year it was! Our retirement system is in shambles, our insurance program is on its last legs, and our school aid formula is underfunded by $13.4 million. There have been cutbacks and layoffs throughout the state.

I challenge all West Virginia education personnel to work in the 1988 elections to get competent pro-education people in state and national positions. If we want to increase our salaries and have an adequate education environment, we must increase our contributions to PACs, and we must *vote*!

Kaye L. Spiker
Vienna, West Virginia

Home Ec Expertise

The November *NEA Today* caused this home economist to see red. It seems there is little understanding of the depth and breadth of home economics among those who write for the publication.

While I acknowledge the favorable work of Arline Johnson ("People"), the story about her implies that jello molds and mixing spoons are the regular fare in home economics classrooms and that quality experiences in nutrition education are rare.

An excellent teaching resource ("TV Movie Shows How Prejudice Hurts the Visually Handicapped") omits home economics from the list of subject areas these suggestions are geared for. Yet home economists could make good use of them for child development and parenting education.

Finally, the "President's Viewpoint" column urges that ancillary personnel be included and consulted—hurray. *But* the example involving nutrition education suggests collaboration between the cafeteria worker and the biology teacher—rather than the home economics teacher, who has many credit hours in nutrition and has had biology and chemistry as part of her B.S. degree.

Doris W. Davis
Califon, New Jersey

Year-Round Schools

The choice of Darlene Roker to write the "No" side of the year-round schools debate (Nov.) was strange. I, too, teach in the Los Angeles Unified School District and—except for one argument—draw an opposite conclusion.

To equate "quality" education with either year-round or nine-month schools is ridiculous, to put it mildly. Quality education still resides mostly with the teacher, in spite of school districts or administrators. Los Angeles teachers made year-round school work in spite of the district's lack of planning.

Changing rooms on a track change basis is certainly better than changing rooms every period—as must be done in overcrowded schools. At my school we have three teachers sharing two rooms.

How can Ms. Roker live in Los Angeles and not realize that we have 95° weather in September and October as well as August—and quite often in April and May as well?

The vacation argument is the most foolish of all. Year-round scheduling allows parents far more flexibility in arranging vacations. Our kids miss few of the extra-curricular experiences Ms. Roker mentions, because our community provides for off-track activities.

My one regret is that we only see off-track colleagues one-third of the time.

Harold P. Mortz
Huntington Park, California

Help Shape NEA

NEA policy is determined by the positions spelled out in annual resolutions adopted by vote of the Representative Assembly. The Resolutions Committee will be meeting March 9-13 to consider suggestions for revising this document based on changing needs of the Association and its members.

As a member, you may submit written proposals specifying the resolution you wish to be changed and the language you want to have incorporated. Proposed changes should be mailed to the Committee in care of staff contact Margaret "Peg" Jones of NEA Research, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Deadline for submission is February 19.

Copies of the current NEA resolutions are sent to members upon request. Write to Policy Documents, NEA Communications, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. □

Allegheny County, Pa., junior high art teacher Kathleen Kosewicz provided this month's cartoon. Other winners of the *NEA Today* cartoon competition will be announced next month. Thanks to all who entered.

What's *your* opinion? NEA members are cordially invited to use this page to exchange ideas with their colleagues around the nation. We reserve the right to edit letters for length. Address correspondence to "Letters," NEA Today, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Debate

Does competition beat cooperation in the classroom?

Rick Miller

YES

Norma Stephan, a 26-year classroom veteran, says competition promotes learning among her fifth grade science, health, reading, and spelling students at Allegany (N.Y.) Elementary School. Stephan belongs to the Allegany Central School Teachers Association.

Competition is an essential element in the classroom, because it is an essential element in our lives. From the moment the child leaves home to begin formal education, the teacher's task is to prepare that student for a place in a highly competitive society.

Students emerge to make their lives in a society concerned with rivalry—competition for a promotion, competition for an improved product, competition for social status, competition for affection.

But competition in school isn't just preparation for the future. Within the classroom, while cooperative effort is often necessary, competition fosters interest, promotes mental alertness, challenges all students, and elicits the highest levels of achievement.

Very simple rewards—a gold star, a smile face, a pencil, being excused from doing a homework assignment, seeing one's name on a winner's chart, or just being able to recite the longest line of correct answers before a group—provide ample inspiration.

Here are a few examples of how we in Allegany Central School use competition.

Students at each grade level, backed by their teachers, take part in wrestling and swimming events. Participants practice long and hard for these competitive sports. When the competition is finished, a very proud child is cited with a plaque or certificate. Such exercises not only encourage proud achievers but provide lessons in being a good loser.

Two sixth grade teachers at my school competed for several successive weeks to see whose class could attain the greatest number of perfect spelling papers. Both reported about 80 percent of their students achieving perfect papers. When the teachers stopped the competition, that average dropped to about 30 percent. This is concrete evidence that competition cultivates the highest level of group achievement.

Our whole faculty recently attended a workshop on assertive discipline, where the workshop leader told of a high school teacher with a group of slow learners. The teacher would put a marble in a jar as a reward for good behavior. When the jar was full, the class got a seven-minute reprieve from classwork, during which they could consume food they'd brought in. Not only did this tactic motivate the class to improve its behavior, but when other groups of students entered the classroom, they wanted to use the same activity to prove they could do better than the previous class. The key was competition.

I firmly believe that the competitive factor produces good results in each class taught. And competition can involve cooperation too. I often pair students up and have each two-person team pool its resources to create a list of adjectives describing weather, or list as many well-known invertebrates as they can, or record reasons why animal populations change, or think of ways to physically change a 3" square of paper. Occasionally the activity is timed; other times it isn't. The workers are quiet, determined, and anxious to succeed. Oral praise is all they desire.

Each year I present hardback books to the boy and girl in the average reading group who have read the most pages. It's a year-long race as students record book titles and number of pages read in a notebook on my desk. Enthusiastic contenders never stop to think of reading as an effort—rather, it's a rewarding experience, as rivalry leads to success.

Children have a built-in desire to be first, whether it's in the lunch line or on a spelling test. If teachers keep that desire alive in the classroom, the pupils can satisfy their wish for success. A spirit of competition fosters creativity and makes learning fun—and teaching enjoyable.

Let competition reign in the classrooms of America—it belongs there.

Craig Kojima

NO

Cooperation is best, says Laverne Leilani Moore, a special education resource teacher for learning disabled kindergartners through sixth graders at Hahaione Elementary School in Honolulu, Hawaii. Moore has taught special education for 18 years.

My native Hawaiian mother instilled in me the idea that the *ohana* (family) was the essence of our existence. Every member had a special role in making the family function in a healthy way. We did not learn to stand out in order to be successful, but sometimes to synchronize our efforts with those of the group, sometimes to function alone.

Any group can be considered an *ohana*. In cooperative teaching, the class becomes a family, or *ohana*. Students trust one another and the teacher, and they operate by rules they set up.

In Hawaiian culture, elders are the voices of authority, because of their experience. In the cooperative learning environment, this authority belongs to those who have demonstrated mastery of skills. Students learn by imitating either teachers or peers.

My students learn to show respect for one another, to work concerns through as a group, to share special skills with others, and to recognize that being Number One is not as important as doing your best.

They recognize each person's unique gifts and culture. There's continuous bonding, which I initiate and they imitate.

The group solves problems that affect individual members by openly sharing what's on their minds. Everyone learns to participate without passing judgment on others. The resulting mutual trust allows the group to accept and help each other willingly.

But what about competitive children—the ones who answer often, dominate discussions, ask lots of questions, and may even put down classmates to build up their own egos? In my experience, these children can learn to compete at being nurturing, caring, and team-oriented.

Competitive children often seek out extra-credit work after completing their assigned work. So while they learn the values of working as part of a group and helping others, they continue to develop according to their ability.

Cooperative learning also benefits students who are mislabeled "slow" because their way of learning doesn't match the way material is presented. When I was teaching educable mentally retarded children in Colorado, for example, the majority of my students were Mexican American. Within two weeks I sensed that two of the girls were not mentally retarded, but simply learned differently due to their cultural background, which had much in common with the Hawaiian.

In a cooperative setting, these girls' potential blossomed. Their IQs rose 10 points in two months, and they were placed in a regular program, with a teacher who applied cooperative values in the classroom.

A specific example of cooperative teaching is the way my class approached Pizza Hut's "Book It!" National Reading Incentive Project. I made book reports a class project—the class selected the book and each child read a paragraph aloud. It didn't matter how well a child read. Each student listened for the facts, which the class summarized after each paragraph. Finally each student contributed his or her ideas to the written report.

As in other instances of cooperative learning, the children were eager to participate, one idea set off another, and the whole was greater than the parts. The children's responses were stimulating, creative, and thoughtful.

A central question remains: Will children taught in a cooperative environment be able to compete successfully in a competitive world?

The answer is a clear *Yes*. These are students who have developed good self-images, who have learned to do the best job they are capable of, who are not afraid to verbalize their thoughts, who are able to work with other people and emphasize their strengths. They're also able to recognize the best way to get a job done—even in competitive settings. □

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